

BIBLE KEYS

By
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INTRODUCTION

This material was originally prepared back in 1962 in Lahore, Pakistan. It was later printed in Karachi as a thirty lesson Bible correspondence course. For the next several years it was used extensively throughout that country.

Being called "Bible Keys Correspondence Course," the idea was to give some of the key teachings of the Bible to acquaint the students with God's word, with Christ, his church, and salvation. It may still be used as a study course although at this time it is being presented in book form.

These lessons are being printed and sent forth again since it is believed that they relate to the needs of the present as much so as when they were first brought out. Please read this book and study it carefully in light of what the Bible teaches. It is the prayer of the author that it may be a means of bringing the truth to many.

If we can be of further help to you please feel free to call on us.

J. C. Choate
Winona, Mississippi

Instructions for those who desire to use this book as a Bible Correspondence Course:

Bible Keys was designed so that the perforated question sheets can be torn along the perforations, filled out, and mailed to the Bible teacher for correction. Please print or write the answers clearly, and write your name and address on each lesson sheet so that it may be identified and returned to you after grading.

Congratulations on taking the course, and we pray that you will be greatly benefitted by your studies. If you have questions or desire further instruction, please feel free to contact your Bible correspondence teacher for help.

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KEY 1

INTRODUCTION TO THE BIBLE

The word Bible literally means "the book." It is the greatest book in all the world. It is the world's best seller. Actually, it is a combination of many books.

The Bible is divided into two main divisions, the Old Testament and the New Testament. Old Testament has reference to the old law or old will that was given to God's people in the long ago. Naturally, the New Testament is the latter law or will that was given to replace the first law.

The Bible is composed of sixty-six books, with the old section having thirty-nine and the new division twenty-seven. Beginning with the Old Testament we have it broken down into several divisions. First, there are five books of law, which are also called the Pentateuch. These are Genesis, Exodus, Leviticus, Numbers and Deuteronomy. Next there are twelve books of history. We have Joshua, Judges, Ruth, I Samuel, II Samuel, I Kings, II Kings, I Chronicles, II Chronicles, Ezra, Nehemiah, and Esther. Then comes five books of poetry. They are Job, Psalms, Proverbs, Ecclesiastes, and the Song of Solomon. The remaining seventeen books are composed of prophecy but even these may be divided into two distinct sections. First, we have the major prophets with five books. There is Isaiah, Jeremiah, Lamentations, Ezekiel, and Daniel. Second, there are the minor prophets with twelve books and they are Hosea,

Joel, Amos, Obadiah, Jonah, Micah, Nahum, Habakkuk, Zephaniah, Haggai, Zechariah, and Malachi.

In the New Testament we also have the books broken down into divisions or sections. The first four books are biography and they consist of Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John. There is one book of history and that is called the Acts of the Apostles. Next comes twenty-one books, epistles dealing with Christian living. Beginning with Romans, they continue with I Corinthians, II Corinthians, Galatians, Ephesians, Philippians, Colossians, I Thessalonians, II Thessalonians, I Timothy, II Timothy, Titus, Philemon, Hebrews, James, I Peter, II Peter, I John, II John, III John, and Jude. And finally there is one book of prophecy, the book of Revelation.

Even though the Bible had many authors, and even though it was written over a period of many years, nevertheless, there is complete harmony and unity throughout. It never contradicts itself. One writer does not pen something, and another write just the opposite. This is one proof of its inspiration by God, for what other book can boast of such a record?

The Bible is the only book that gives the story of the beginning of things, of man's creation, of the purpose of his existence, and where he shall eventually go. This great volume not only tells of the good traits in man's character, but also points out the bad side as well.

Through this book we may learn of the past, know what is expected of us at the present, and be able to look into the future. The many prophecies contained in it have been fulfilled. The many promises have been thus far kept. Could there be any doubt that it will not stand the future

tests as well?

God himself speaks through this medium. Through it he has revealed his Son and his will for man. It tells of the beginning of the church and of its growth. It assures victory to all who will obey its precepts.

In speaking of it in the long ago, the apostle Paul said, "All scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness, that the man of God may be perfect, thoroughly furnished unto all good works" (II Timothy 3: 16, 17). Thus, it is all inspired of God, it is from God, it is the word of God, and therefore completely informs man of the good work he is to do.

Christ spoke of the scripture as truth and only the truth can make one free (John 8:32; 17:17). Peter says that we are to speak only as the oracles of God, that is, in harmony with the teachings of the Bible (I Peter 4:11). Again, Paul says that we are to study the word and Christ adds that the scriptures are to be searched (II Timothy 2: 15; John 5:39). And last, but not least, we are warned not to add to or subtract from the word (Revelation 22:18, 19).

Yes, the Bible is the greatest and grandest book in the world. It can bless you if you will obey it or will curse you if you neglect it or oppose it. Study its contents, respect it, love it, and obey it, and it will prove to be a blessing to you, both in this life and in the world to come.



YOUR EXAMINATION

1. What does the word Bible mean? _____
2. Which book is the world's best seller? _____
3. How many books does it contain? _____
4. What are the two main divisions? _____
5. Define the word "testament" _____
6. What is the difference between the Old Testament and the New Testament? _____
7. How many books are there in the entire Bible?

8. How many books are there in the Old Testament?

9. How many books are there in the New Testament?

10. List the five divisions of the Old Testament _____

11. List the four divisions of the New Testament _____

12. Yes or No:

- A. The Bible is filled with contradictions? _____
- B. Many writers had part in penning the Bible?

- C. The entire Bible was written in exactly five years? _____
- D. The Bible is the only book that tells of man's beginning? _____
- E. However, the scriptures have nothing to say about man's future? _____
- F. Many prophecies were given but none were ever fulfilled. _____

13. How does God speak today? _____

14. Who said that all scripture is given by the inspiration of God? _____

15. What makes man free? _____

16. We are not to add or _____ in dealing with God's word.

17. How should we study God's book? _____

KEY 2

GOD AND HIS CREATION (Genesis 1 and 2)

The Bible begins, "In the beginning God created the heaven and the earth" (Genesis 1:1). Neither here, nor anywhere in the Bible, is there an attempt made to prove that God exists or that he created all things. This is assumed already to be an accepted thing. And should this be so strange since man is supposed to be an intelligent being with the knowledge that for each thing that exists there had to be some higher power behind it? That is God.

Genesis gives a full account of how things came into existence and the order in which they were created. We do not need to know how long it was after the creation of the earth before animal life and human life came into being to know that there was a God. As far as that is concerned, there are many things that we do not have to know about the creation to be convinced that it was all the Lord's doing. But read Genesis 1 and 2 for the full story. This is the only true record that we have that tells what really happened.

But note that in all of God's creation he placed man above everything else. Man was to be over the fowls of the air, the fishes of the sea and the beasts of the field. And so it has always been. There are many animals, etc., much larger than man but all may be tamed and taught to obey

him. All fear man.

There are many reasons why one should believe in God. In the first place nature itself is a testimony to the effect that there is a God. Just look around you. You see that which God brought into existence and that which is perpetuated by the law of nature that God set in order. Perhaps you will reason that since you cannot see God with the naked eye then you do not believe he exists. You can see his work though. I cannot see your brain but I believe you have a brain by that which you do. When I look at my watch I cannot see its maker but I believe that it had one. As surely as things are, then it is that sure that someone had to create them. Just because you can't see them that doesn't prove they do not exist. God is the brain and the life behind the entire world's existence.

Look at the beautiful flowers, the heavens, a new born baby. How can you help but believe in an eternal, all powerful being? David said, "The heavens declare the glory of God; and the firmament sheweth his handywork" (Psalm 19:1).

There is a God because the Bible teaches that he is. The Bible is full of God. It tells us that he is a Spirit, that he is powerful, that he is all-seeking, all knowing, and that he is from everlasting to everlasting.

God is because that is the only logical conclusion that one can reach. To say there is no God is but to say truthfully there is a God. For if I could say that then I would be saying there is a God – myself. To say that there is no God is but to say that an impossible thing happened – all came into existence without a creator. That would be as sensible as pointing to a house and saying that it was not

built but suddenly one day it just appeared; it just happened.

How can one point to evolution as being the answer when all living things have been the same for hundreds and thousands of years? Not long ago I visited the Cairo Museum and saw on display some mummified monkeys, dogs, etc. When they lived 5000 years ago they were just monkeys and dogs, even as there are monkeys and dogs now. According to the theory espoused by many, monkeys should all along be evolving into man or there should be no such thing today as monkeys since all should have already evolved to a higher plane. Then what about man? Has he reached the most perfected state or is he eventually to evolve to something greater and better. But this is foolishness.

As you can see, the wise thing is to accept the facts of the case and quit relying on theories. David said that only a fool would say there is no God (Psalm 14:1).

The God of heaven is the same one that James speaks of as being the giver of all blessings (James 1:17). John said that God so loved the world that he gave his only begotten Son (John 3:16). So every way you turn there is the Lord, his work, his blessing, and his mercy being bestowed upon men. Truly, he lives.

YOUR EXAMINATION

1. Quote the first verse of the Bible _____

2. Why does the Bible make no attempt to prove there is a God? _____
3. Do we have to know every detail about the creation to prove that God exists? _____
4. What did God create last? _____
5. What animals fear man? _____
6. List the things God did:
 - A. On the first day _____
 - B. On the second day _____
 - C. On the third day _____
 - D. On the fourth day _____
 - E. On the fifth day _____
 - F. On the sixth day _____
 - G. On the seventh day _____

7. Give three reasons why one should believe in God

8. Who said the heavens declare the glory of God?

9. Must one see his creator with the naked eye to believe that he exists? _____
10. According to the theory of evolution man should be doing what? _____

11. What passages of scripture says that the fool has said there is no God? _____
12. Who is all-seeing, all-knowing, and eternal? _____
13. What are some of the things that God has done and continues to do? _____

KEY 3

THE LAW OF MOSES

Man was perfect in the beginning but because of disobedience he fell and was driven from paradise (Genesis 2:3). Later, God decided that he would send a flood to destroy him. Noah and his family were spared because they were found to be righteous (Genesis 6:7).

Some time after the flood God chose Abraham through whom he was to raise up a mighty nation. However, his descendants, the Israelites, eventually found themselves in bondage in the land of Egypt, and it was here that Moses came into the picture for he was selected to lead them out. After many generations of slavery they left Egypt with God's help and went to Mt. Sinai where God presented them with a law that has come to be called the law of Moses (Exodus 19:20).

The specific laws given were in the form of ten commandments but this was not all of that law by any means. It contained scores of laws that dealt with man's social behavior as well as his relationship with his maker.

It should be noted and remembered that this law was given solely to Israel. It was never given to the Gentiles and was never intended for them. The only way they might have been brought under it would have been for them to have been made proselytes and thus be made Jews.

But why was this law ever given? Paul said many

years later, "Wherefore then serveth the law? It was added because of transgressions, till the seed should come to whom the promise was made; and it was ordained by angels in the hand of a mediator" (Galatians 3:19). Now notice why the law was given. It was given because of transgressions. In other words, the Lord gave his people a law to follow until a certain time should come. For how long? Till the seed should come. Who was this? Christ. Paul continues in Galatians 3:29, "And if ye be Christ's then are ye Abraham's seed, and heirs according to the promise." That is to say, that the law ended with the coming of Christ.

It was Christ who said that one jot or tittle of the law would not pass away until all had been fulfilled (Matthew 5:17, 18). Then he said, "These are the words which I spake unto you, while I was yet with you, that all things must be fulfilled, which were written in the law of Moses, and in the prophets, and in the psalms, concerning me" (Luke 24:44). Were all things fulfilled? Even while on the cross he said all things were finished. And Paul adds, "Blotting out the handwriting of ordinances that was against us, which was contrary to us, and took it out of the way, nailing it to his cross" (Colossians 2:14).

The Bible teaches that at one time God spoke through Moses but he now speaks through his Son Jesus Christ. "God who at sundry times and in divers manners spake in time past unto the fathers by the prophets, hath in these last days spoken unto us by his Son, whom he hath appointed heir of all things, by whom also he made the worlds" (Hebrews 1:1, 2). At the transfiguration God said of Christ, even though Moses was present, "This is my

beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased; hear ye him" (Matthew 17:5). God asked man to hear who? Was it Moses? No. Was it John the Baptist? No. But Jesus Christ, the Son of God.

Again, the Hebrew writer clearly shows how the old covenant or testament has been taken away and a new one has taken its place (Hebrews 10). We are no longer under the law of Moses but under the grace that comes through Christ (John 1:17). We are not bound to a system of laws that demands animal sacrifices but are under a law that was sealed with the blood of Christ once and for all (Heb. 9).

Many people of our day want to hold to the law of Moses, especially the ten commandments. But they served their purpose and were blotted out in order that a new and better law might take its place, the law of Christ. Why should one want to leave a perfect law to go back to something that is imperfect? The old law could not save anyone. If it could have then it would not have been taken away. Again, why should one want to leave the blood of Christ to go back to animal sacrifices?

Hence, only a man ignorant of the Bible would attempt to return to the law of Moses. Only a foolish man would strive to keep two laws at once. That would be like trying to keep the laws of two distinct countries when both laws contradict and oppose one another in certain instances.

The wise will leave the past laws to history and will live in the present accepting the law that God has ordained that we be governed by. A study of the scriptures will show that even though the ten commandments were not brought over to the new law as such, nevertheless, all but one was incorporated in it. The one missing is the Sabbath day law.

The nine were incorporated because they were divine truths that have ever been binding and will ever remain binding upon man. For example, the government might discard former laws and set out to make new ones, but it might be deemed wise to include certain laws that were in the old one. And even though one obeys the new law in full, he cannot say that he is keeping the old law.

The law of Moses was meant for Israel, but the law of Christ is open for all who will obey it. Christ has invited all to come and receive rest. Thus, the law has changed.

YOUR EXAMINATION

1. In what state did man live in the beginning? _____

2. Why was man driven out of paradise? _____
3. How did God destroy the world? _____
4. What family was spared? _____ Why? _____
5. God chose what man through whom to raise up a mighty nation? _____
6. What group of people found themselves in bondage in Egypt? _____
7. Name the man God raised up to lead them out _____

8. On what mountain did God reveal the law? _____

9. Name the ten commandments _____

10. Were there any other laws? _____
11. To what group of people was it given? _____
12. In what way could a Gentile keep the law? _____

13. Why was it given? _____
14. How long was the law to last? _____
15. Who blotted out the law? _____
16. Through whom does God speak now? _____
17. How many of the ten commandments are incorporated in the new law? _____
18. Can one keep two opposing laws at the same time?

19. Why should one want to return to the law of Moses? _____
20. Grace and truth came through whom? _____
21. What law is binding now? _____

KEY 4

THE COMING OF CHRIST (Luke 1-4; John 1; John 18-21)

Jesus Christ was with God from "the beginning." This is clearly seen in God's statement concerning the creation of man. "And God said, Let us make man in our image, after our likeness; and let them have dominion over the fish of the sea, and over the fowl of the air, and over the cattle, and over all the earth, and over every creeping thing that creepeth upon the earth" (Genesis 1:26).

After man fell and was driven from paradise then it was necessary that he should have a redeemer. Thus, we read the first promise that Christ would be that redeemer. Speaking to the serpent, God says, "And I will put enmity between thee and the woman, and between thy seed and her seed; it shall bruise thy head, and thou shalt bruise his heel" (Genesis 3:15).

The Lord later promised Abraham that through his seed should all the nations of earth be blessed (Genesis 12:1-3). Christ was to be the fulfillment of this promise (Galatians 3:26, 29). This promise was repeated over and over to generation after generation. And God kept his promise.

It was also prophesied that Christ would come. For example, Isaiah said, "Who hath believed our report? and to whom is the arm of the Lord revealed? For he shall

grow up before him as a tender plant, and as a root out of a dry ground: he hath no form nor comeliness; and when we shall see him, there is no beauty that we should desire him. He is despised and rejected of men, a man of sorrows, and acquainted with grief: and we hid as it were our faces from him; he was despised and we esteemed him not" (Isaiah 53: 13). The entire fifty-third chapter of Isaiah deals with the coming Redeemer. As a matter of fact, one can read about the Lord's entire life by just reading the prophecies of the Old Testament. He may read of the birth of Christ, his childhood, his works, his death, his burial, and his resurrection. It was through the reading of the Old Testament that such men as the eunuch came to learn of the Christ (Acts 8:29-40).

Finally, when we turn to Matthew 1:18, we have these words, "Now the birth of Jesus Christ was on this wise . . ." And so we have the story of how Christ was born into this world. Notice some facts:

1. He was born of the virgin Mary (Matthew 1:23).
2. His name would be Jesus (Matthew 1:21).
3. He would save his people from their sins (Matthew 1:21).

In connection with the Lord's coming there are many other facts that can be only briefly listed. Some of them include:

1. John was the forerunner of Christ. He prepared the way for the Lord (John 1:6, 15; Luke 7: 24-28).

2. Christ was born in Bethlehem but grew up in Nazareth (Luke 2:1; Matthew 2:19).
3. He grew up as most other boys of his day did (Luke 3:51, 52).
4. At approximately thirty years of age he began his public ministry (Luke 2:21-23).
5. He was baptized to set an example for others to follow (Matthew 3:13-17).
6. He chose twelve apostles (Matthew 10:24).
7. He sought not to condemn the law but to fulfill it (Matthew 5:17, 18).
8. He was tempted of the devil (Mark 1:12).
9. He was transfigured (Luke 9:28).
10. He performed many miracles (John 2:1; 11:1; Luke 8).
11. He taught in parables (Matthew 13:25; Luke 13).
12. He was betrayed by one of his own (Matthew 26:47; John 18:2).
13. He was given a false trial (Luke 23; John 19).
14. He died on the cross without sin for the sins of the world (Romans 5:6-8).
15. He was buried and then resurrected three days later (Matthew 26:28; John 19:20).
16. After giving the great commission he ascended to the Father in heaven (Matthew 28:19; Mark 16:15, 16; Acts 1).

John wrote, "For God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life" (John 3:16).

Hence, the Lord kept his promise and all the prophecies were fulfilled concerning the coming and life of Christ. And all of these things have been recorded that we might be made to believe and be blessed thereby (John 20:30, 31).

The Bible teaches that Christ is Alpha and Omega, the first and last. He is likewise spoken of as King of kings and Lord of lords (Revelation 19:11-16). He was the greatest man to ever live, and yet, he was not just another man, but the Son of God (Matthew 17:5). He is the Saviour of the world. He is all in all. Truly HE is.

YOUR EXAMINATION

1. Where was Christ in the beginning? _____
2. Give the scripture reference that first mentions the promise of Christ _____
3. What was the promise that was made to Abraham?

4. Who was the fulfillment of that promise? _____
5. Did the prophets ever speak of Christ? _____
6. Name one who did _____
7. One may read of the life of Christ in the Old Testament. True or False _____
8. Who was to be the mother of Jesus? _____
9. Was she to be a virgin? _____
10. What was Christ to be called? _____
11. Give the purpose of the Lord's coming _____

12. About how old was the Lord when he began to preach? _____

13. Why was Christ baptized? _____
14. Who was the forerunner of Christ? _____
15. How many apostles did Christ have originally?

16. Who betrayed him? _____
17. How was he put to death? _____
18. Where is the Christ now? _____

KEY 5

ESTABLISHMENT OF THE CHURCH

The church is simply a group of people called out or set apart for a special purpose. The church of Christ is composed of a body of people who believe in Christ and are determined to follow his teachings and his will.

Many years before the church ever came into existence such men as Isaiah, Joel, and Daniel prophesied that it would be established, where it would be established, who would establish it, when it would be established, and the purpose of its establishment. Isaiah said, "And it shall come to pass in the last days, that the mountain of the Lord's house shall be established in the top of the mountains, and shall be exalted above the hills; and all nations shall flow unto it. And many people shall go and say, Come ye, and let us go up to the mountain of the Lord, to the house of the God of Jacob: and he will teach us of his ways, and we will walk in his paths: for out of Zion shall go forth the law, and the word of the Lord from Jerusalem" (Isaiah 2:2, 3).

Joel wrote, "And it shall come to pass afterward, that I will pour out my spirit upon all flesh; and your sons and your daughters shall prophesy, your old men shall dream dreams, your young men shall see visions; And upon the handmaids in those days will I pour out my spirit" (Joel 2:28, 29). Then Daniel made the statement, "And in the days of these kings shall the God of heaven set up a

kingdom which shall never be destroyed . . .” (Daniel 2:44).

There are many other prophecies that could be used but we will pass now to the days of Christ to find some of the Lord’s promises that the church would be established. Christ said, “And I say also unto thee, That thou art Peter, and upon this rock I will build my church; and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it” (Matthew 16:18). Please note that it had not been established yet and even the Lord points to it in a future sense. That is, it would be established some time after the time he made these statements. After Peter confessed him as being the Son of God, he said, “Blessed art thou, Simon Bar-jona: for flesh and blood hath not revealed it unto thee, but my Father which is in heaven” (Matthew 16:17). He tells Peter here that he will build his church on the confession that he made. What was that confession? That he was the Son of God. So the church was to be built upon Christ, not upon Peter. Also, notice who promised to build the church. Christ said, “I will build my church . . .” Hence, the church of Christ. Not a man-made church wearing a man-made name, but the church belonging to Christ, wearing his name.

In Mark 9:1 he said, “Verily I say unto you, That there be some of them that stand here, which shall not taste of death, till they have seen the kingdom of God come with power.” Now notice, the Lord makes a promise here concerning the kingdom, or the church, which are the same. He says that some of the very people who were present at that time would still be living when the kingdom, or the church, came in power. So it was near at hand. It hadn’t been established yet, but it would soon be there.

When we turn to Acts, chapter two, we read of the establishment of the church. The Holy Spirit came on the day of Pentecost. That is, the apostles were baptized with the Holy Spirit and they had the power to speak in different tongues or languages and perform miracles. Well, that fulfills Mark 9:1. But to absolutely settle the matter, Peter himself said, "But this is that which was spoken by the prophet Joel" (Acts 2:16). Then he goes on to quote Joel, chapter two, concerning the pouring out of the Spirit and the kingdom coming with power.

In the next place, a kingdom was set up that would never be destroyed. Paul said in Hebrews 12:28 that a kingdom had been set up that could not be moved. That kingdom or church still stands and will stand forever. Thus, Daniel 2:44 was fulfilled.

Then finally, Isaiah 2:2, 3 was fulfilled with the establishment of the church on the day of Pentecost. The place was Jerusalem. The time was about A. D. 33. The kingdom or church was established. The gospel was preached and all who obeyed it were added to the church (Acts 2:47). But what did the Lord say in Matthew 16:18? He said that he would establish his church, and he did through his apostles. Further, it was founded upon a rock, and Christ was that rock (I Corinthians 3:11).

Neither John nor Peter established a church but Christ did. Now whose church should one be a member of? Christ's church, of course. No other church was authorized or established with God's approval. He seeks followers only one way — through his kingdom.

There are many man-made churches but they are worthless. Christ has the true church. He is the head of it

(Colossians 1:18), Saviour of it (Ephesians 5:23), foundation of it (I Corinthians 3:11). It wears his name (Rom. 16:16) and he is coming back for it one day (Ephesians 5:27). Now why should anyone want to be a member of any other church when he can be a member of Christ's church?

But how can one know the difference between a man-made church and the church of Christ? That is simple. If it was not established in the city of Jerusalem then it is not the right one. If it was not established in A. D. 33 then it is too young. If it doesn't wear the name of Christ then it does not belong to Christ. If it does not follow the New Testament as its only guide, it is not following Christ.

Paul says there is but one church, or body (Ephesians 4:4). That's the one Christ established.

YOUR EXAMINATION

1. Name some of the prophets who spoke of the establishment of the church _____

2. Where was the church to be established? _____

3. When was it built? _____
4. Who would build it? _____
5. How long would it stand? _____
6. Christ said the church would come with what?

7. Is there any difference between the kingdom and the church? _____
8. Who adds the obedient to the church? _____
9. On what was the church to be built? _____
10. What name does the church wear? _____
11. Who is the head of it? _____
12. Who is the Saviour of it? _____

13. Can one be saved outside of the church? _____
14. How many churches does Christ have? _____
15. Are there any man-made churches? _____
16. How can one tell the difference between Christ's church and man-made churches? _____

17. Would you like to be a member of the church of Christ? _____

KEY 6

DEFINING THE CHURCH

Often when speaking of the Lord's church the question is asked, "What is the church of Christ?" That most certainly is a good question and deserves a scriptural answer.

However, before telling what the church is let us begin by telling you what the church isn't. Too many people are confused about the church because they often think it is something that it isn't.

The church of Christ is neither Catholic, Jewish, nor Protestant in origin or in practice. It is not a denomination or a group of denominations. It is not the meeting house or a material building. It is not a political organization. It is not just a social club. No, it is none of those things at all, although you would be surprised to know how many people think of the church as being such. Because of such a misunderstanding they are led to be a part of groups, promote organizations, etc., that are entirely out of harmony with the will of God.

But someone may want to know, "If the church is none of these things then what is it?" Well, that is the thing we want to find out. According to the way the term is used in the Bible the word "church" comes from the Greek word *ekklesia* which means "the called out." That is, the church is composed of those who have been called out of the kingdom of darkness into the kingdom of light

(Colossians 1:13, 14). Another way of putting it, the church is composed of those who have obeyed the gospel of Christ and are thus saved from their past sins (Acts 2:38; 2:47).

In the Bible the church is given many descriptive titles. For instance, it is spoken of as a vineyard, stressing the need for more workers. It is called the kingdom, showing its dominion over all earthly kingdoms. It is spoken of as the sheepfold, a place of safety. It is described as the bride of Christ, and signifies the fact that it ought always to be beautiful, awaiting the return of the bridegroom, Christ. It is called the house of God, with the Lord as builder of the house. It is declared to be the family of God with God being the father, Christ being our brother, and we as members of the church being brothers and sisters in Christ. It is referred to as the body of Christ, with Christ as its head and the body being composed of many members, individual Christians. This is the church, yea, the church of Christ.

To help better explain what the church of Christ is, please notice these facts:

1. It is spoken of in prophecy (Daniel 2:44).
2. It was promised by Christ (Matthew 16:18).
3. It was to come with power (Joel 2:28; Acts 1:8).
4. It was established on the day of Pentecost (Acts 2).
5. The time was A. D. 33 (Acts 2).
6. The place was Jerusalem (Luke 24:49; Acts 2).
7. It was to wear the name of Christ (I Corinthians

- 12:27; Romans 16:16).
8. It was built upon the rock, Christ (Matthew 16:18).
 9. It was a blood-bought institution (Acts 20:28).
 10. Christ is head (Colossians 1:18).
 11. He is Saviour (Ephesians 5:23).
 12. The obedient are added to it, and thus saved (Acts 2:47).
 13. Its work is to preach the gospel and help the needy (Mark 16:15; James 1:27).
 14. It is to worship God each first day of the week (Acts 20:7).
 15. It is composed of individual Christians (Acts 11:26).
 16. Its headquarters is heaven (Acts 1:10-12).
 17. Its guide is the Bible (I Peter 4:11; James 1:25).
 18. It is governed by elders and deacons, and has preachers, teachers, and members following God's word (I Timothy 3; Titus 1).
 19. It will never be destroyed (Hebrews 12:28).
 20. The Lord is coming back for it one day (Ephesians 5:27).
 21. There is but one (Ephesians 4:4).
 22. Members of the church are called Christians (I Peter 4:16).

The church of Christ is the greatest institution on earth. It has the greatest being to serve. It has the greatest work to perform. It is unique, but it is simple. It is not the Saviour, but one must be a member of it to be saved. It is the only one of its kind. There are many imitations but

only one true church.

The church of Christ is to be found around the world. And yet, the majority oppose it. This church is not popular because it seeks to preach the truth only. It is persecuted because it opposes all evil and false religion. But those who are Christians are the most blessed people on earth because they not only have hope in this life but in the world to come, eternal life.

This, then, is the church of Christ.

YOUR EXAMINATION

1. List some things that the church of Christ is not _____

2. What does the word church mean? _____

3. Of what does the church consist? _____
4. Who adds the obedient to the church? _____
5. List some descriptive titles of the church _____

6. In what city was the church established? _____

7. Who is the head of the church? _____
8. On what is the church built? _____
9. What is the work of the church? _____

10. On what day of the week does the church worship? _____
11. Where does the church of Christ maintain headquarters? _____

12. How long will the church exist? _____
13. How many churches are there? _____
14. Is the church of Christ popular? _____
15. Why are its members blessed? _____

KEY 7

CHURCH ORGANIZATION

It would hardly be possible to make a real study of the church without giving some thought to its organization or government. One important reason for this is to establish a Bible picture of this phase of the church instead of leaving the idea that its government is like that of the denominational churches.

First, let it be understood that Christ established the church. Therefore, he is the builder, the owner, and the head of it. Paul says of him, "And he is the head of the body, the church: who is the beginning, the firstborn from the dead; that in all things he might have the preeminence" (Colossians 1:18). It should be very clear then that the church of the Bible is without an earthly head, a president, a bishop or any other supreme leader that gives directions for the Lord's people to follow.

Second, since Christ is the head of the church and since he is now in heaven, then it is naturally concluded that the headquarters of the church are in heaven. Another way of putting it, the church of Christ does not have any earthly headquarters. It never has, does not today, and never will.

Third, there is but one church, but it is made up of many congregations. Christ said that he would build his church (Matthew 16:18). He was speaking of the church universal. However, the apostle Paul later spoke of the

churches of Christ (Romans 16:16), having reference to the various congregations that compose the one church.

Fourth, each congregation is autonomous. That is, each congregation is complete within itself and is not dependent on any other congregations, as such. A congregation may cooperate with other congregations in doing some particular work but cannot be forced to do so. Each congregation has its own government and therefore could survive even if all other congregations apostatized or fell away. Or if a given congregation becomes unfaithful, then that does not necessarily endanger the other congregations.

Fifth, each congregation is to have its own elders or bishops. They are not to dictate, but are to lead, feed the flock, etc. (Acts 20:28). In the New Testament church they are called by several names, such as elders, bishops, shepherds, presbyters, and overseers. Their qualifications are listed in I Timothy 3 and Titus 1. If a congregation does not have men who can qualify to be elders, as Christians they are to continue without them until they develop to the point that they can qualify. It should also be noted that only men can serve as elders, or in any public-office of the church.

Sixth, each congregation is to have its own deacons. They are to work under the elders of the church. They are to be helpers or servants, doing these things that perhaps the elders do not have time to do. Many think of the elder's job as having to do with the spiritual matters of the church and the deacons work pertaining to the physical or material aspects of the church. Both groups are important. Not just anyone can be a deacon, as is evidenced by the fact that there are qualifications given for them likewise in I Tim. 3.

Seventh, in the church may also be found preachers, evangelists, teachers, and just plain Christians. To mention these different ones does not necessarily indicate that they represent offices or positions, but rather indicates their field of services. The church of Christ is not composed of just a number of offices that its members must be continually striving to fill, but the church is very simple in nature and should be left as the Lord planned it.

It should be pointed out that in the religious world as a whole you'll find several different types of church government, most of which are unscriptural. Because of such systems there has developed what many call the clergy and the laity. There is on the one hand the higher-ups in church government, and on the other hand, those who are mere members and only take orders. In Catholicism, the pope serves as the head, and a long stream of officers work under him. In Protestantism there are bishops, presidents, and other important men who pull the strings. But wouldn't it be better to leave all of that and get back to the Bible teaching on church organization and government? With man's system, man is glorified and exalted. With the Lord's way man does not hold such a position but looks to Christ as his head and leader in all spiritual matters. Regardless of what is said, the Way is the right way and only it will stand the test of time.



YOUR EXAMINATION

1. Is the government of the church of Christ like that of denominational groups? _____
2. Who holds the position as head of the church?

3. Does he share that position with any man? _____
4. Where are the headquarters of the church located? _____
5. How many churches does the Bible speak of?

6. Is the universal church made up of individual congregations of the church of Christ? _____
7. Each congregation is _____
8. This type of government protects against total

9. Under Christ, which men in the church are to "feed the flock?" _____
10. Can women be elders? _____
11. The deacons serve in what ways? _____

12. Are there evangelists in Christ's church? _____
13. Do denominational churches follow God's pattern of government for the church? _____
14. What system have they developed? _____
15. Who is the head of the Catholic group? _____
16. Does the New Testament authorize him to fill such a position? _____
17. Who is ruler and leader of the church of the Bible? _____
18. Who is exalted in man's system of church government? _____
19. To whom does all glory belong? _____

KEY 8

WORK OF THE CHURCH

What is the work of the church? Surely there is some purpose behind its existence. It must have a function, or a work to do. It does. However, it is not the work of the church to go into business, thus buying and selling for profit. The work of the church does not consist of entering the employment business, hiring everyone who wants to preach and sending them out. The church is not in the business of giving away everything that it can obtain just for the sake of giving it away. It is not the work of the church to go into the school business and thus operate schools all over the country. These things we have mentioned are certainly important and must be considered but they are not the first obligation of the Lord's body. Yes, the church has a work to do but it is not always that which many think it is.

The work of the church is the greatest work in all the world. It is the only institution that can do it, and, as a result, glorify God of heaven. This is the work the Lord has ordained that the church should do, and to try to do it through some other means is purely out of harmony with the will of God, or just failing to do it will result in his disapproval.

The work of the church is really twofold. First, it is to preach the gospel that souls may be saved, and second

it is to help the poor and those in need. Aside from these two functions the church is not primarily obligated.

Let's begin by noticing first of all the duty of the church to preach the gospel. Christ himself said in the great commission, "Go ye into all the world and preach the gospel to every creature, He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved; but he that believeth not shall be damned" (Mark 16:15, 16). In Matthew's record of this same commission he says that the Lord said, "Go ye therefore, and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost" (Matthew 28:19). So this is the chief duty of the church, that is, to go. We are to go into all the world, to every nation, and finally to every creature, preaching the gospel of Jesus Christ that souls might be saved.

The Lord didn't say how we should go, but he did say go. He didn't give a particular method of preaching the gospel, but he did say to preach the gospel. Note, we are not to teach opinions, the doctrines of men, etc., but only the gospel. We may preach it in the pulpit, by tracts, through the newspaper, by a correspondence course, by radio, by television, or in many other ways, but regardless of the way we choose, we are to preach the gospel in its purity. Paul said in II Timothy 4:2 that we are to preach the word. Preach what? Only the word of God.

Everything the church does, every good work performed, every sermon, yes everything, is done with the thought in mind of saving souls. And that is why we are to preach the gospel. We are to do it in order that our souls may be saved and in order that other souls might be saved. We are saved in order that we might help to save

others, and so it goes with all Christians.

The work of the church doesn't stop here, and verily the next phase is simply a continuation of the first part. The church is to be instrumental in helping those in need. When the Lord was on the earth he was continually concerned about the poor and those in need of help and he would have us to be likewise concerned. If we ever get to the place that we do not care about others or that we are not concerned about their needs then surely we do not have the spirit of Christ (Romans 8:9).

Now in helping others we must strive to help those who are truly in need and those who are deserving (I Timothy 5). Otherwise, it is possible to spend all of one's time in helping those who are not worthy, for some people are all too willing to take advantage of the goodness of the church.

The church can do just so much. That is, it can help only as it has the means and the ability to help. But whenever possible, food should be provided for the hungry, clothes to cover the naked and cold, and shelter for those who are left outside. Such help also includes caring for the sick and afflicted, seeing after the homeless and the aged. For James said, "Pure religion and undefiled before God and the Father is this, to visit the fatherless and widows in their affliction, and to keep himself unspotted from the world" (James 1:27).

Each man should first remember that it is his obligation before God to provide the best he is able for himself and for his family. Then if help must be received, the church can make up what is lacking (I Timothy 5:8). Someone has said that you can't get an individual interested in

spiritual matters as long as he is hungry, cold, and in dire need of the material things. Surely this is true and this is one reason why the church seeks to do this type of work. We are concerned about the physical body but we are more concerned about the spiritual being.

Remember, the Lord would have all to be saved. He is not willing that any should perish but that all should come to repentance. But man can be saved only as he has the opportunity to hear the gospel and obey it. Whether it be through preaching a sermon or helping the poor, the truth is being proclaimed. This is the work of the church.

YOUR EXAMINATION

1. Does the church have a particular work to do?

2. List some of the mistaken ideas about the work of the church _____

3. Can any institution other than the church do its work? _____
4. What is the twofold purpose of its existence?

5. Both of these functions are intended to end in what? _____
6. To what parts of the world are Christians to take the gospel? _____
7. How many people are to hear the story of Christ? _____
8. What transportation may be used to "go?" _____

9. What methods may be used in teaching people?

10. What is the purpose behind every act of the church? _____
11. While on earth, was Christ concerned about the destitute? _____
12. If we are unconcerned about the needy people, what do we lack? _____
13. Is the church to help everyone who asks? _____
14. Why must Christians be particular about who receives aid? _____

15. What groups are to be helped? _____

16. How does James define pure religion? _____

17. What is the duty of the individual before he seeks aid? _____

18. Is the church more concerned about the physical body, or the spiritual body? _____

KEY 9

THE NAME

The name that one wears is very important. It identifies him. It tells who he is. Companies recognize the value of their name and therefore they advertise it in order that they may do even more business. Just about everything is classed "good" or "bad" on the basis of its name. The same principle applies in the spiritual world. And so there is something in a name. The Bible teaches, "Neither is there salvation in any other: for there is none other name under heaven given among men, whereby we must be saved" (Acts 4:12).

Realizing the importance of the name, the question that faces us is, what name should we wear if we belong to Christ? The Bible may speak of us as being children of God, holy, sanctified, saints, as belonging to the Lord, but what name or title should we wear to express all of this and even more? Well, let's return to the word of God and see what such people were called in the first century. We read, "And the disciples were called Christians first in Antioch" (Acts 11:26). What are they called now? Christians. Just Christians. Well, weren't they a certain kind of Christian? No, they were Christians, and Christians only. Now what do you suppose the Lord's people should be today? That's right. Christians, and Christians only. If we belong to Christ then what else can we be? If we are walking in the

steps of Christ then naturally we will be Christians, which means "Christ-like."

Peter said, "Yet if any man suffer as a Christian, let him not be ashamed; but let him glorify God on this behalf" (I Peter 4:16). Who was Peter talking about? He was speaking of those who had taken upon themselves the name of Christ, those who had become Christians. Furthermore, he was simply pointing out to them that they should not be ashamed of that name but rather that they should glorify God through wearing it. The only way we can glorify the Lord is through doing all that we do through the name Christian.

Paul said upon one occasion, "And whatsoever ye do in word or deed, do all in the name of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks to God and the Father by him" (Colossians 3:17). But let me ask you this question: how can one do all through the name of the Lord unless he is wearing his name? Why, he can't! And so many people are wasting their time because they are trying to serve the Lord through denominational names and titles, through man-made names, and it can't be done. It is strange that man is always wanting to tuck something on to the name Christian. He calls himself a Catholic Christian, a Methodist Christian, a Presbyterian Christian, etc., when all the Lord wants one to be is just a Christian. Yes, it is possible to be just a Christian. How? By obeying the gospel and becoming a member of the Lord's church. If you are anything more than a Christian then you are not a true Christian. If you are anything less than a Christian then you are not a Christian. The Lord wants us to belong to him, not to some man. Let us be Christians only.

But as a group of Christians, that is, as the church, someone might want to know what name the church should wear. Well, who promised it? Who established it? Who is its head? Who is the Saviour of it? Who shed his blood to purchase it? Who is coming back for it? According to Matthew 16:18; Acts 2; Colossians 1:18; Ephesians 5:23; Acts 20:28; and Ephesians 5:27, Christ is the answer to all these questions. Therefore, the church should wear the name of Christ. So what do we have? We have Christians who are members of the church of Christ. It is just that simple.

Paul says in Romans 16:16, "The churches of Christ salute you." Somebody is ready to say that this suggests a number of denominational churches. But if you will read the context you will find that the apostle was speaking of the church of Christ at Corinth, the church of Christ at Thessalonica, etc., and so, in writing to the church in Rome, he said, "all of these churches of Christ or congregations of the church of Christ send greetings to you brethren in Rome." But someone immediately mentions the seven churches of Asia of Revelation 1 - 3, with question: "Weren't they seven denominations?" There again you simply have several congregations of the church of Christ. Surely the Lord did not establish many churches but he established only one church, and only one way, and his church was to wear his name. Mark it down then that any church today that does not wear the name of Christ is a fake, an imposter, and does not belong to him. For how can it belong to the Lord if it does not even wear his name?

Christ wants individuals to be Christians and as a whole, members of the church of Christ. Could you blame

him? Are you, therefore, a Christian? Are you a member of the church of Christ? If not, then how can you be pleasing to God and abiding by his word? And if you can't prove this, then what hope do you have? Investigate these truths for yourself.

YOUR EXAMINATION

1. Why is every person's name important? _____

2. Would we be able to identify each other or anything without names? _____
3. Are names important in spiritual matters? _____
4. What were followers of Christ called in the first century A. D.? _____
5. If we follow the Biblical example what name will we wear? _____
6. What does the name "Christian" mean? _____

7. Through what name are we to glorify God? _____

8. Where is this statement found? _____
9. Complete this scripture: "And whatsoever ye do in _____ or _____, do all in _____ giving thanks to God and the Father by him."
10. Can we do everything in Christ's name if we aren't wearing it? _____

11. Some people call themselves _____
12. Can this be so? _____
13. If we are trying to be something more or less than "Christians" are we real Christians? _____
14. Several Christians grouped together as the church are called what? _____
15. Why is the name "church of Christ" used? _____

16. What does the word church mean or indicate?

17. Does the term "churches of Christ" in Romans 16:16 signify several denominations? _____
18. How do we know that only one church was in existence? _____

19. If we are not living in accordance with the New Testament can we truthfully call ourselves Christians? _____

KEY 10

THE GOSPEL OF CHRIST

The word gospel means good news or glad tidings of Jesus Christ (Romans 10:15). It was first preached in promise and then as fact. Christ was the giver and it has power to save all who will believe and obey it. Paul said, "For I am not ashamed of the gospel of Christ: for it is the power of God unto salvation to everyone that believeth; to the Jew first, and also to the Greek" (Romans 1:16).

Lest another gospel be preached, the apostle Paul warned, ". . . which is not another; but there be some that trouble you, and would pervert the gospel of Christ. But though we, or an angel from heaven preach any other gospel unto you than that ye have received let him be accursed" (Galatians 1:7-9). But it might be reasoned, "Surely a person would not dare preach another gospel." Well, many have and many continue to do so. There is the gospel of "faith only," the gospel of "many churches," the gospel of "worship as you please," the gospel of "grace only," the gospel of "sprinkling and pouring," etc. But all of these are false gospels. There is but one true gospel (Mark 16:15, 16).

Later Paul warned that the Lord will eventually come and take vengeance on all of those who obey not the gospel. He said, "And to you who are troubled rest with us, when the Lord Jesus shall be revealed from heaven

with his mighty angels, in flaming fire, taking vengeance on them that know not God, and that obey not the gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ: who shall be punished with everlasting destruction from the presence of the Lord, and from the glory of his power" (II Thessalonians 1:7-9). But how can one obey the gospel? That is something we are going to be finding out.

First, let us consider the facts of the gospel. They are the death, burial and resurrection of Christ. We read, "Moreover, brethren, I declare unto you the gospel which I preached unto you, which also ye have received, and wherein ye stand: by which also ye are saved, if ye keep in memory what I preached unto you, unless ye have believed in vain. For I delivered unto you first of all that which I also received, how that Christ died for our sins according to the scriptures; and that he was buried, and that he rose again the third day according to the scriptures" (I Corinthians 15:1-4). Now everything else is based on these facts. This is the foundation of Christianity, of the church, and of hope. Naturally these facts must be believed.

Second, there are commands of the gospel that must be obeyed. The Bible teaches that one must hear the truth. "So then faith cometh by hearing, and hearing by the word of God" (Romans 10:17). On hearing the word as also suggested in Romans 10:17, one must believe it or have faith in it. We read further, "But without faith it is impossible to please him: for he that cometh to God must believe that he is, and that he is a rewarder of them that diligently seek him" (Hebrews 11:6). After faith, one must repent of his sins, or turn away from them. Christ said, "I tell you, Nay: but, except ye repent, ye shall all

likewise perish" (Luke 13:3). Again, "And the times of this ignorance God winked at: but now commandeth all men everywhere to repent" (Acts 17:30). Then what? The confession that Jesus Christ is the Son of God is necessary. Christ himself said, "Whosoever therefore shall confess me before men, him will I confess also, before my Father which is in heaven" (Matthew 10:32). The eunuch of Acts 8 said that he believed that Jesus Christ was the Son of God and straightway Philip baptized him (Acts 8: 37, 38). The last command to be obeyed is the act of baptism. Peter told the people on the day of Pentecost, "Repent, and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins, and ye shall receive the gift of the Holy Ghost" (Acts 2:38). And Christ said, "He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved; but he that believeth not shall be damned" (Mark 16:16). By obeying these simple commands, one obeys the gospel of Christ, is thereby saved, and added to the church (Acts 2:47). But to some people this is too simple. They think the plan of salvation should be very difficult and so they write up a group of rules and regulations. Consequently, they would have people doing this and doing that and going through a long process before they can, supposedly, be saved. The Lord is displeased with this. There is just one way to be saved and that is the way Christ has ordained it in his word (John 14:6; James 1:22).

Third, the gospel has promise. We receive salvation from our past sins (Acts 2:38), the gift of the Holy Spirit (Acts 2:38; 3:19), the privilege to worship the Lord (John 4:23, 24), all spiritual blessings in Christ (Ephesians 1:3), and the hope of eternal life if we are faithful to him unto

death (Revelation 2:10; Matthew 25:46). Truly, without obedience and faithfulness, man has nothing.

So this is the gospel of Christ with facts to be believed, commands to be obeyed, and promises to be received. The Lord is gracious to those who love his will and who strive to obey it. He has invited all to come and obey him. It is now man's responsibility to take advantage of what the Lord has to offer.

YOUR EXAMINATION

1. Define the word "gospel" _____

2. Whose gospel is it? _____
3. The gospel is the power of God unto _____
4. How many gospels did Christ give? _____
5. What will become of those who invent new gospels? _____
6. What are some new gospels men are preaching? _____

7. What will become of those who do not obey the true gospel? _____
8. Who will take vengeance on these people? _____

9. What are three major parts of the gospel? _____

10. What are the facts of the gospel? _____

11. What are the commands of the gospel? _____

12. How many of these must be obeyed? _____
13. What are the results of obedience to the gospel?

14. Is man satisfied with God's simple plan? _____
15. How many ways are there in which man may be saved? _____
16. What are the blessings of obedience to the gospel? _____
17. If one is faithful unto death, what will he receive? _____
18. Without the gospel what does man have? _____

19. Whose responsibility is it to obey the gospel?

KEY 11

HEARING

If one hears a rumor, can he place much dependence in it? Can he say that it is the truth? The answer is no. The same is true also in the realm of spiritual matters. You may hear many things but unless they are based upon the word of God then they are of no value to you or to anyone else. As a matter of fact, believing error could cause you to be lost eternally.

To begin with, we should want to know the truth above everything. Error may tickle one's ears but it will not save him. There may be many things that you would like to do, but unless you are guided by the truth, your deeds would be in vain. What is truth? Christ said, in speaking to God. "Sanctify them through thy truth: thy word is truth" (John 17:17). So, that which God has spoken is the truth and Christ adds, "And ye shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free" (John 8:32).

You should not listen to man but to God, to Christ, to the scriptures. God said, "This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased; hear ye him" (Matthew 17:5). Again we read, "God, who at sundry times and in divers manners spake in time past unto the fathers by the prophets. Hath in these last days spoken unto us by his Son, whom he hath appointed heir of all things, by whom also he made the worlds" (Hebrews 1:1, 2). Now at one time

God spoke through Moses and the prophets but in these last days he spoke to us through his Son. Are we living in the last days? (Acts 2:16, 17). Yes, and have been since the death of Christ. So we are to hear him. How are we to hear him? Through a wee small voice? By a vision? In reading the creeds of men? No, but by accepting those things that are written. John wrote, "And many other signs truly did Jesus in the presence of his disciples, which are not written in this book: But these are written, that ye might believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God; and that believing ye might have life through his name" (John 20:30, 31).

There are several methods of hearing the truth. One may hear by reading the scriptures. In other words, one may hear Paul, Peter, John, and other preachers as he reads the scriptures or has someone read them to him. In the next place, one may hear the will of the Lord by listening to a faithful gospel preacher proclaim the word. But even then he should not accept the preacher's words just because he said them. He should always return to the scriptures to see if the truth is really being preached. And then again, one may hear the message of salvation as he reads a gospel tract, paper, sermon, etc.

Realizing the importance of hearing the truth, and the truth only, Christ said, "Search the scriptures; for in them ye think ye have eternal life; and they are that which testify of me" (John 5:39). Again, Paul said, "Study to show thyself approved unto God, a workman that needeth not to be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth" (II Timothy 2:15). We read also that the people of Berea were more noble than those of Thessalonica because they

searched the scriptures to see if those things they heard were the truth (Acts 17:10, 11).

In every case of conversion in the New Testament you'll find that the people first of all had to hear the truth of God. On hearing the truth, faith was produced in their hearts (Romans 10:17). This is the way it is done today.

Although it is important to hear, let us be sure to keep in mind that it is equally important that one hear the right thing, the truth. Again, it is not enough just to hear. Many have heard the truth, but they are not saved. Why? Because if one is to be saved he must act upon that which he has heard. One might hear that he'll receive a new house if he'll go by a certain business office to claim it, but if he never goes then he'll never get it. One may hear of salvation through Christ but unless he applies what he has heard to his life then it will do him no good.

Be eager to hear but weigh carefully that which you hear. Don't accept a thing just because it sounds good. Ponder it, investigate it, and then if you find that it is the truth, accept it, treasure it, and obey it.

YOUR EXAMINATION

1. Can confidence be placed in rumors? _____
2. Believing error could result in what? _____

3. What is the truth? _____
4. What makes us free? _____
5. Who are we to hear in spiritual matters? _____

6. How do we hear Christ? _____
7. Why did John say the gospel was written? _____

8. Through what ways can one "hear" the truth?

9. Should we accept what any preacher says without investigation? _____
10. Why are we to study the scripture? _____

11. Why were the Bereans noble people? _____

12. In every case of conversion in the New Testament, the people had to _____

13. After one hears the truth he must do what? _____

14. Without obedience hearing is void. True or False: _____
15. Should we accept all that we hear in religion? _____

16. How can we check the things we hear to see if they are true? _____
17. What should we do about truth when we hear it? _____

KEY 12

FAITH

What is faith? The Hebrew writer says, "Now faith is the substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen" (Hebrews 11:1). Although the inspired author did not intend this to be a definition of faith, it certainly gives us some idea of what faith is. Faith is that which is produced in one's heart as a result of hearing the word (Romans 10:17). That is, it brings one to the point of accepting without question the truths of God's word, and upon that he builds, he obeys, and has the hope of that which is to come.

To illustrate this, let me say that I believe that there is a President of the United States, that there is a Tokyo, Japan, that there is a Mount Everest. I have never seen the President, or these places, but I believe they exist. Why? Because of the many evidences of their existence, and because of the many testimonials from those who have seen them, and those who have written about them. Thus, I freely express my faith in them to others.

I have never seen God or Christ. I have never been to heaven. But I believe that God and Christ live and that one day the righteous will go to heaven. Why? Because of the many evidences of their existence and because of the witnesses of Christ and testimonies concerning him and because of those things written concerning them. Hence,

I affirm these truths to others without hesitation.

This kind of faith is necessary on our part. Without faith we would be miserable people. We all believe in someone and in something, so the important matter is to be sure our faith is founded upon the truth and is channeled in the right direction, for the Bible says, "But without faith it is impossible to please him: for he that cometh to God must believe that he is, and that he is a rewarder of them that diligently seek him" (Hebrews 11:6). Please note that before one can come to God, first, he must believe that he is, and second, that he rewards or blesses those who seek him.

Naturally, then, faith is a condition of salvation. It is not the only condition, but it is a primary one because one could not obey the other commands of God unless he first had faith. With this in mind, let us notice a few passages of scripture that stress the importance of faith, or belief, in obeying the gospel. We read, "For God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish but have everlasting life" (John 3:16). When the jailor asked Paul and Silas what to do to be saved, the scripture says, "And they said, Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and thou shalt be saved, and thy house" (Acts 16:31). Some automatically jump to the conclusion that all one has to do to be saved is to believe. Well, as mentioned earlier, one must first believe before he can obey, and reading further in Acts 16 you'll find that the word of God was preached to those people and then they were taken and baptized. But when does the Lord save one? Christ answers by saying, "He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved; but he that believeth not shall be

damned" (Mark 16:16). Faith, or belief, saves only as it leads one to do what the Bible teaches.

When it comes to faith only, James says that it damns one instead of saving him. Listen, "Even so faith, if it hath not works, is dead, being alone" (James 2:17). Again, "Ye see then how that by works a man is justified and not by faith only" (James 2:24). Christ says, "If ye love me, keep my commandments" (John 14:15). So it is important that we understand the proper relationship of faith and works. Faith alone will not save, and neither will work alone save (Ephesians 2:8, 9). Put them together and they spell salvation.

Faith will lead one to repent of his sins, to confess that Christ is the Son of God, and then to be baptized for the remission of sins. Faith will not only do this, but it will likewise lead one to live according to God's word all the days of his life, and then give him the hope of eternal life. Why? Because the things that are written have been written that we might believe, and then by following the truths therein the blessings of God are showered upon us (John 20:30, 31; Revelation 2:10).

Don't be afraid to believe. Turn your faith loose. Don't limit it. You'll be surprised to see what it will do for you. Remember, "For I am not ashamed of the gospel of Christ: for it is the power of God unto salvation to everyone that believeth: to the Jew first, and also to the Greek. For therein is the righteousness of God revealed from faith to faith: as it is written, The just shall live by faith" (Romans 1:16, 17). The Bible also declares that we walk by faith and not by sight.

YOUR EXAMINATION

1. What is faith? _____
2. Faith brings us to what point? _____
3. _____ and _____ concerning Christ produces faith.
4. Things _____ concerning Christ produce faith.
5. It is important that our faith be founded on what? _____
6. Can we please God without faith? _____
7. God rewards what people according to Hebrews 11:6? _____
8. Faith is a condition of what? _____
9. Without faith we could not do what? _____

10. What does John 3:16 say about faith? _____

11. Is faith alone enough to save a soul? _____

12. What two things must take place according to Mark 16:16 before one is saved from his past sins? _____
13. Faith saves only as it does what? _____
14. What does James say about faith and works? _____

15. Can a person be saved with faith? _____
Without works? _____
16. Faith and works combined spell _____

17. Faith will lead one to what? _____
18. The just are taught to live by _____
19. We are to walk by _____, not by _____

KEY 13

REPENTANCE

The term repentance means to reverse oneself completely, to have a change of heart. In this case, it means to quit sinning. For sure, one could not hope to be what the Lord would have him be unless he was willing to lay down his sins and to have a change of life.

Christ put it simply, "I tell you, Nay: but except ye repent, ye shall all likewise perish" (Luke 13:3). In other words, repent or perish. Does this mean that it makes no difference with the Lord whether one repents or perishes? No, for it certainly does make a difference. Peter said, "The Lord is not slack concerning his promise, as some men count slackness; but is longsuffering to usward, not willing that any should perish, but that all should come to repentance" (II Peter 3:9). The Lord is not willing that any should perish, but if one refuses to repent then he will perish. Therefore, it is up to the individual.

In speaking on Mars Hill, Paul made it clear that God would have all men to repent. He said, "And the times of this ignorance God winked at; but now commandeth all men everywhere to repent" (Acts 17:30). One cannot say that the Lord has not asked him to repent, for he has. He has even commanded this of us. If you have reached the age of being responsible, that is, to know right from wrong, then you are included in this admonition.

One cannot be so good that he needs not repent and one cannot become so evil that he cannot repent if he so desires. All people, regardless of what kind of life they live, have sinned and are therefore in need of salvation. Paul declares, "For all have sinned, and come short of the glory of God" (Romans 3:23). And even as a Christian, John writes, "If we say that we have no sin, we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us" (I John 1:8). This suggests that even the Christian is not perfect. He may make mistakes, err and sin through ignorance or weakness. In such a case, John further writes, "If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness" (I John 1:9).

In this particular article we are not discussing Christians primarily but we are talking about what the sinner must do to be saved and we have found that he must repent of his sins after he has gained faith in God. In previous lessons we have seen that one must hear the truth and then he must believe the truth, and in lessons to follow it will be shown that he must confess Christ and be baptized. But right now, right in the middle of all of this, he must repent. To give an example, Peter told people on the day of Pentecost that they should do this very thing. "Then Peter said unto them, Repent, and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins, and ye shall receive the gift of the Holy Ghost" (Acts 2:38). To another group of people he said, "Repent ye therefore, and be converted, that your sins may be blotted out, when the times of refreshing shall come from the presence of the Lord" (Acts 3:19). Now what do we have? We have this command being given to the people to repent. It was of

God and therefore necessary to salvation.

In every case of conversion in the book of Acts you'll find it stated either directly, or implied, that before the people were baptized they repented of their sins. So it is today that before one is baptized he must repent. Of course, one may be immersed without genuinely repenting but he is only fooling himself. The Lord knows his heart and if he doesn't repent, there is no forgiveness of sins and no salvation.

One must be so sorry for his sins that he will want to quit them and live a better life (II Corinthians 7:10). But it is not enough just to be sorry about one's sins. He must actually leave them behind. Then he must replace his deeds with righteous acts, otherwise, the old sins will return (Galatians 5:19-24; Ephesians 4:24-29).

Repentance alone will not save. One may quit sinning and live a good life, but unless he has obeyed the other commandments of God, he is still a sinner. Too, one may repent of his sins, complete his obedience to the gospel, and live the Christian life for a while but then slip back into sin. What will happen to him? Unless he repents again and returns to the Lord through prayer he'll be lost as though he never repented in the first place (II Peter 2:20-22).

It is easy to do right if you'll remember that by failing to do what the Lord says, you are gambling with your soul. Sin will damn you but righteousness will save you (Romans 6:23). Remember, too, that whatsoever a man soweth that shall he also reap (Galatians 6:7-8).

YOUR EXAMINATION

1. Define "repentance." _____
2. Can we be what the Lord desires without repentance? _____
3. We must repent or _____
4. Does it matter to Christ whether we repent or perish? _____
5. If one refuses to repent will he be saved anyway? _____
6. At what age does one come under the command to repent? _____
7. Are there people who have no need of repentance? _____
8. Are there people so evil that repentance will do them no good? _____
9. What does Romans 3:23 say? _____

10. Can Christians sin and be in need of repenting? _____
11. A person must have _____ in God before he

can repent.

12. What two things must one do after he repents, in order to be saved? _____
13. Is repentance necessary to salvation? _____
14. What took place in every case of conversion in the book of Acts? _____
15. If one does not _____ baptism will not wash away his sins.
16. One must replace evil ways with what? _____
17. Will repentance alone save? _____
18. If one who has repented and obeyed the gospel slips back into sin and remains there, what will become of him? _____
19. A man always _____ what he _____

KEY 14

CONFESSION

Confession means to acknowledge, to make known, to declare, or to express faith in a thing. In this case, one is to confess that Jesus Christ is the Son of God. According to the scriptures this is to be public confession, made with one's own mouth.

Christ himself says, "Whosoever therefore shall confess me before men, him will I confess also before my Father which is in heaven. But whosoever shall deny me before men, him will I also deny before my Father which is in heaven" (Matthew 10:32, 33). Now let us observe a few things. First, Christ said **whosoever**. It doesn't matter who he may be, if a person will confess Christ before men, he in turn will confess that one before the Father in heaven. Christ is simply saying, "you confess me and I'll confess you." Isn't that fair enough? It would seem that it is. On the other hand, he makes it just as emphatic that whosoever denies him before men will be denied before the Father in heaven. That is, whosoever will reject him and his will on earth will be rejected at the judgment.

Paul says, "For with the heart man believeth unto righteousness; and with the mouth confession is made unto salvation" (Romans 10:10). There are two things that we need to notice in this passage. To begin with, Paul says that this confession must be made with the

mouth, and we have a scriptural example that we are going to use a little later to verify this. Secondly, the writer states that both the belief and the confession are unto salvation, or in the direction thereof. No, one is not already saved just because he believes in the Lord and the same is true with the confession that Christ is the Son of God. But the next step does put one into Christ and that is the act of baptism. Read Romans 6:3, 4 and Galatians 3:26, 27.

Let us now turn to Acts 8 to read a scriptural example of the public confession of one's faith. Philip had been directed to go and teach the eunuch the truth and the record says, "And the angel of the Lord spake unto Philip, saying, Arise, and go toward the south unto the way that goeth down from Jerusalem unto Gaza which is desert. And he arose and went: and, behold, a man of Ethiopia, an eunuch of great authority under Candace queen of the Ethiopians, who had the charge of all her treasure, and had come to Jerusalem for to worship, was returning, and sitting in his chariot read Esaias the prophet. Then the Spirit said unto Philip, Go near, and join thyself to this chariot. And Philip ran thither to him, and heard him read the prophet Esaias, and said, Understandest thou what thou readeest? And he said, How can I except some man should guide me? And he desired Philip that he would come up and sit with him. The place of the scripture which he read was this, He was led as a sheep to the slaughter; and like a lamb dumb before his shearer, so opened he not his mouth: in his humiliation his judgment was taken away: and who shall declare his generation? for his life is taken from the earth. And the eunuch answered Philip, and said, I pray thee, of whom speaketh the prophet this? of himself,

or of some other man? Then Philip opened his mouth, and began at the same scripture, and preached unto him Jesus. And as they went on their way, they came unto a certain water: and the eunuch said, See, here is water: what does hinder me to be baptized? And Philip said If thou believest with all thine heart, thou mayest. And he answered and said, I believe that Jesus Christ is the Son of God. And he commanded the chariot to stand still: and they went down both into the water, both Philip and the eunuch: and he baptized him. And when they were come up out of the water, the Spirit of the Lord caught away Philip, that the eunuch saw him no more; and he went on his way rejoicing" (Acts 8:26-39).

In the foregoing reading it isn't very difficult to see what happened. The angel of the Lord commanded Philip to go to a place where he would find a certain man. Note though, the angel didn't go himself but sent a gospel preacher to relay the message. Philip found a religious man, an Ethiopian eunuch, a prominent man on his way back home after having been to Jerusalem to worship. No doubt he was a proselyte of Judaism. But he was reading the scriptures, even though he didn't realize that he was reading about Christ. Philip joined him, taught him the truth, and assisted him in his obedience to the gospel. But in order to obey the truth he had to be a believer, had to confess Christ as being the Son of God, and then he had to be baptized for the remission of his sins. Only after this was he able to go on his way rejoicing as a Christian.

The matter of confessing Christ is but another step in the direction of salvation.

YOUR EXAMINATION

1. Define "confession" _____

2. How many are included in Christ's invitation to confess him? _____
3. Must the confession be made before others? _____
4. What has Christ promised to do for those who confess him? _____
5. If we deny him, what will he do? _____
6. Faith in Christ and the confession of our faith in him are _____ salvation.
7. The next step of obedience is _____
8. Baptism, based on faith that is followed by repentance and the confession, puts one _____

9. Was the Ethiopian eunuch taught by an angel?

10. From what scripture was the eunuch reading?

11. Who was the subject of the passage? _____
12. After the eunuch heard the story of Christ and believed it, what question did he ask? _____

13. What did Philip say he must do first? _____

14. What two things did the eunuch do then? _____

15. Was the eunuch a Christian before he was baptized? _____
16. What did he do after completing his obedience to the gospel? _____
17. Confessing that Christ is the Son of God is another step in the direction of _____

KEY 15

BAPTISM

We come now to the act of baptism which remits one's sins and puts him into the church. It is no more unusual or more important than any other command found in the Bible. It is simply the last step that one takes in order to enter Christ, and since God has commanded it, we must obey.

Baptism alone does not save any more than faith only saves but one cannot be saved apart from either act. One believes **unto** Christ, repents **unto** Christ, confesses **unto** Christ, and then is baptized **into** him. In other words, every act brings one a little closer, but one does not have salvation until he does all the Lord has asked. To illustrate, one may be a number of feet away from the door of the house. Taking the first step does not put him into the house, but by taking another step and another step he finally comes to the last step and that one puts him **into** the house. Neither can he say that the last step alone did the job because it was necessary to take the preliminary steps in order to take the one that put him through the door. I am sure you can see the point. Paul says, "Know ye not, that so many of us as were baptized **into** Jesus Christ were baptized **into** his death?" (Romans 6:3). Again he said, "For as many of you as have been baptized **into** Christ have put on Christ" (Galatians 3:27). Now, how

does one get into Christ? Is it by faith only? Is it through repentance? According to the Bible it is by the act of baptism. If you have not been baptized according to the Bible you are not in Christ. You may say you are but you are not. Further, to say that you are saved without baptism is to say that you are saved out of Christ, without Christ. But who would believe it?

The same act that puts one into Christ, at the same time puts him into the body of Christ or the church of Christ. "For by one Spirit are we all baptized into one body (or church) whether we be Jews or Gentiles, whether we be bond or free; and have been all made to drink into one spirit" (I Corinthians 12:13). It is in this manner that the Lord adds to his church (Acts 2:47).

What is baptism? Some say it is sprinkling, pouring, or immersion and one can take his choice. However, when one investigates he finds that sprinkling is just sprinkling and pouring is just pouring. Neither one can be properly referred to as baptism. The word baptism goes back to the Greek word *baptizo* which means to immerse, to bury, to dip, etc. In this case it is a burial in water (Romans 6:3, 4; Colossians 2:12; Acts 8). In order to keep sprinkling and pouring out of the picture, realize that the Bible itself defines baptism as a burial (Colossians 2:12), and Paul says that there is but one baptism (Ephesians 4:5). Now what is it? There is just one baptism and it is a burial. That is all there ever was and that is all there will ever be, whether we will accept it or not. If you have been sprinkled or poured then you have never been baptized. You may think you were and you may be told you were but according to the Bible you were not. Now whose word will you

accept? What man says or what the Bible teaches?

According to the scriptures one must be baptized to be saved. Christ said, "He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved; but he that believeth not shall be damned" (Mark 16:16). Peter said, "The like figure whereunto even baptism doth also now save us (not the putting away of the filth of the flesh, but the answer of a good conscience toward God,) by the resurrection of Jesus Christ" (I Peter 3:21). Note, both Christ and Peter say that baptism saves. Will you say that baptism does not save? Why does it save? Because the Lord said so, and that should be enough reason for it. And yet, he didn't say, and the Bible does not teach, that 'baptism only' saves.

Where is there an example of baptism being commanded? Peter told the people on the day of Pentecost to repent and be baptized for the remission of sins (Acts 2:38). He told Cornelius and his household that they should be baptized (Acts 10:48). Saul was told to arise and be baptized to wash away his sins (Acts 22:16). So most certainly we have examples showing that people were commanded to be baptized and stating the reason why they were to be baptized. In fact, in every case of conversion under the New Testament law, the people were told to be baptized. Read Acts, chapters 2, 3, 8, 9, 10, and 16.

Baptism pictures the death, burial, and resurrection of Christ. One dies to his sins, is buried with his Lord by baptism, and then is resurrected from the watery grave to walk in newness of life. Read Romans 6 very closely.

In the act of baptism there is the new birth. The Lord said one must be born again and that is of water and of the Spirit. "Of water" refers to baptism and "of

the Spirit” means according to the will of God (John 3).

Surely then it is not asking too much to ask one to do what the Lord commanded. Follow the example of the eunuch and be baptized and then you can go on your way rejoicing (Acts 8). But not until.

YOUR EXAMINATION

1. What does baptism do? _____

2. Is baptism the most important command in the New Testament? _____
3. Does baptism alone save? _____
4. Under what conditions will baptism wash away one's sins? _____
5. How does one get into Christ? _____
6. If you have not been baptized, and yet say that you are saved, what are you advocating? _____

7. Through what means are we added to the church? _____
8. "For by one spirit are we all _____ into _____."
9. Is sprinkling baptism? _____ Is pouring baptism? _____
10. What is baptism? _____

11. We are _____ with him in baptism.
12. How many baptisms are there in God's sight?

13. Does scriptural baptism save? _____
14. Give two examples in which baptism was commanded _____
15. Are there other examples of baptism? _____
16. Was baptism commanded in every case of conversion in the New Testament? _____
17. What does baptism picture? _____

18. Can the death, burial, and resurrection of Christ be portrayed in any other act? _____
19. In the act of baptism there is the _____

20. When can one "go on his way rejoicing?" _____

KEY 16

THE DAY OF WORSHIP

What day is the day of worship? Is it Friday, Saturday, or Sunday? Some would say Friday, if they are Muslims. Some would say Saturday, if they are still trying to follow the Old Law. And many others would declare Sunday because they claim to be Christians or because of their knowledge of Christianity. But what does the Bible teach?

The Bible does not in any way teach Islam so therefore Friday as a day of worship need not even be further considered. As to Saturday, the Old Law taught that the Sabbath day should be kept holy. But the fact is, we are no longer living under that law and therefore we are not bound to keep the Sabbath or to worship the Lord on Saturday. With the giving of a new law came a new day of worship. The Lord was no longer to come last, but first. Therefore, he asks us not to worship him on the seventh day of the week, but rather on the first day of each week. Paul and other Christians did this as recorded in Acts 20:7. Listen, "And upon the first day of the week, when the disciples came together to break bread, Paul preached unto them, ready to depart on the morrow; and continued his speech until midnight." Now notice, it specifically says the first day of the week, not the seventh day of the week. On the first day, the same day Christ arose from the grave Christians were commanded to meet and partake of the

bread and fruit of the vine in remembrance of him.

Again, Paul says that the giving of our earthly goods should be on the first day of the week. We read, "Upon the first day of the week let every one of you lay by him in store, as God hath prospered him, that there be no gatherings when I come" (I Corinthians 16:2). But why should giving be done on the first day of the week? Because that is the convenient time of doing it inasmuch as that is the day on which Christians assemble in order to worship God. It is just that simple. The first day of the week is clearly stipulated. Surely Paul would not suggest that Christians meet on the first day of the week to give if they were to worship on some other day.

In the Hebrew letter we have this admonition, ". . . not forsaking the assembling of ourselves together, as the manner of some is, but exhorting one another: and so much the more, as ye see the day approaching" (Hebrews 10:25). Please observe the following: 1) They were not to forsake the assembling. 2) As some had been doing. 3) But they were to exhort one another. 4) As they saw the day approaching. Evidently they knew of a particular day that had been set aside for the assembling of themselves together, and since the sabbath law had been nailed to the cross and a new day of worship had taken its place, then it is very evident that this day was the first day of the week. This is the only conclusion that one can possibly reach.

John said on one occasion, "I was in the Spirit on the Lord's day" (Revelation 1:10). Some would say probably that every day is the Lord's day. Yes, it is true that all time belongs to God, but John surely had a specific day in mind or else he would not have mentioned the day at all.

Surely if every day had been the Lord's day then he would not have said, "I was in the Spirit on the Lord's day." But since he did say such, he must have had reference to the first day of the week, the day of worship.

In going back to the resurrection of the Lord we find that significantly enough, even he arose from the grave on the first day of the week (Matthew 28:1; Mark 16:1, 2). Some have argued that the reason the Lord did not arise on the Sabbath day was because it was hallowed; but how foolish. Did not the Lord heal on the Sabbath? No, the Lord did not come forth on that day lest everyone reach the conclusion that that day was the day of worship.

With the taking away of the old way of worship, a new way and a new day was given by Christ. The old law was removed and a new law given. The old worship was replaced by a new worship. The old day was done away and a new day of worship given. The old physical kingdom was replaced by a new spiritual kingdom. The blood of animals was replaced by the blood of Christ. The old name was to be no more and a new name was to be given. How complete was the change in God's law!

If you intend to worship God scripturally then you first of all must worship on the day that he has ordained, the first day of the week. It does make a difference, or else the Lord would have never written it. It is commanded in I Corinthians 16:2, and we have an example of Christians worshipping on this day. So it is binding on all Christians today.

YOUR EXAMINATION

1. According to Islam, what is the day of worship?

2. According to Judaism, what is the day of worship? _____
3. According to the New Testament, what is the day of worship? _____
4. Which must we accept if God is to be pleased?

5. Why is the Sabbath day no longer set aside for worship? _____
6. We are to put God _____ not _____
7. In Acts 20:7, the Christians met on which day to worship? _____
8. Christians meet on the _____ day to remember Christ through the Lord's Supper.
9. On which day are we commanded to give of our goods to God? _____
10. What four points are brought out in Hebrews 10:25? _____

11. John said he was in the Spirit on which day?

12. Does all time belong to God? _____
13. Why would the mentioning of the specific
"Lord's Day" have special significance? _____

14. On what day did Christ come forth from the
grave? _____
15. Some say he did not come forth on the Sabbath
day because of respect for it. How do we know
this is not so? _____
16. Why did he not come forth on the Sabbath day?

17. The _____ law was removed and a new _____
given.
18. The _____ worship was replaced by a new
_____.
19. The _____ day was done away and a new
_____ given.
20. The _____ physical kingdom was replaced
by a new _____ kingdom.

KEY 17

ACCEPTABLE WORSHIP

There is a right way to worship and there is a wrong way. There is man's way and there is the Bible way. There is the theory that it doesn't make any difference how you worship just so long as you are honest and sincere. However, the Bible teaches that there is just one way to worship and that is the way the Lord has ordained.

Christ said, "God is a Spirit: and they that worship him must worship him in spirit and in truth" (John 4:24). The Lord said that this is the way it must be done. He didn't say that it could be done this way if it pleased us, but he said this is the way it has to be. How's that? Acceptable worship must be directed toward God and it must be in spirit and in truth. That is, one must worship God with understanding. He must be sincere about it. And in the next place, he must worship God according to the truth, or according to the teachings of the Bible. This is worshipping in **spirit and in truth**. It is possible to worship with the understanding but not according to the scriptures. And it is possible to worship as the Bible teaches but to be insincere about it. In either case, such worship would not be accepted. To worship God in such a way as to please him, one must of necessity worship in both spirit and truth.

But what does the New Testament teach with regard to the acts of worship? Well, through a study of the

scriptures you'll find that there are five acts of worship, or five distinct things that the Lord asks the Christian to do if he is going to worship in a pleasing way. We will study these one by one.

First, the Christian must meet with the Lord's people each first day of the week to study the scriptures. Paul says, "Study to show thyself approved unto God, a workman that needeth not to be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth" (II Timothy 2:15).

Second, Christians are to come together on the Lord's day (Sunday) to pray to God. There are a host of scriptures that suggest this. For instance, in Acts 2:42 it says that the early Christians continued steadfastly in the apostle's doctrine, which included prayer. Paul says in I Thessalonians 5:17 that we should pray without ceasing. The Lord said in Luke 18:1 that men ought always to pray.

Third, Christians are to meet for the purpose of singing songs of praise to God. We read, "Speaking to yourselves in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing and making melody in your hearts to the Lord" (Ephesians 5:19). Again, the same writer says, "Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly in all wisdom; teaching and admonishing one another in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing with grace in your hearts to the Lord" (Colossians 3:16).

Fourth, Christians are to partake of the Lord's Supper each first day of the week. The bread is to be partaken of in remembrance of the body of Christ and the cup is to be partaken of in remembrance of the blood of Christ. Please listen to the divine record as the Lord instituted this supper. "And as they were eating, Jesus took bread, and

blessed it, and gave it to the disciples, and said, Take, eat; this is my body. And he took the cup, and gave thanks, and gave it to them, saying, Drink ye all of it: For this is my blood of the new testament, which is shed for many for the remission of sins" (Matthew 26:26-28). In I Corinthians 11 Paul referred to the Lord's statements, and in Acts 20:7 we have an example showing that this supper was partaken of on the first day of the week.

Fifth, and last, we have the command that the Christian is to give on the first day of the week. Paul says, "Upon the first day of the week let every one of you lay by him in store, as God hath prospered him, that there be no gatherings when I come" (I Corinthians 16:2). He says again "Every man according as he purposeth in his heart, so let him give; not grudgingly, or of necessity: for God loveth a cheerful giver" (II Corinthians 9:7).

This is the way that God is to be worshipped. To do more than this is too much. To do less is too little. God has spoken and man is to follow.

God's way is simple and to the point. It gives all the opportunity to worship him whether rich, poor, educated, uneducated, or whatever the circumstances may prevail. However, some want to complicate matters and put a lot of formality into worship. They would have an individual bowing, kneeling, chanting, burning candles, marching, etc., etc. Mark it down, these things are of man and not of God.

If all men would worship the same God they would all worship him the same way, that is according to the Bible. Take heed to it.



YOUR EXAMINATION

1. What theory do men put forth regarding worship? _____
2. Our worship is directed to whom? _____
3. We must worship in _____ and in _____
4. What does "in spirit" mean? _____

5. What does "in truth" mean? _____

6. If we do not understand what we are doing, is our worship acceptable to God? _____
7. If we do not worship according to the pattern God has made, is our worship acceptable? _____
8. How many acts are included in worship? _____
9. List these 5 parts of worship _____

10. Why are we to study? _____
11. To whom are our prayers directed? _____

12. In our singing, we praise _____, and teach and admonish _____
13. We partake of the bread in remembrance of Christ's _____
14. We partake of the fruit of the vine in remembrance of Christ's _____
15. God loves a _____
16. Every man is able to worship God according to his plan. True or False: _____
17. If all men would _____ the same God, they would all worship him the _____ way, according to the _____

KEY 18

BIBLE STUDY

It would seem that there would be no need for a lesson on the study of the Bible but we will see that there most certainly is a need for one. Why? In order to focus attention on a number of things.

To begin with, whether it be in Sunday morning worship or Bible study that is taking place in the home, it should be just that. For how could it be Bible study if the Bible was not studied? This is just to emphasize the fact that there is no place for the manuals, creeds, and disciplines of men in a period of Bible study. The Bible is the book that man needs to know, and a study of it will help one to see that the creeds of men are contrary to the Lord's will.

We are to keep in mind also that we are to study the Bible in every worship service to God. It is one of the main items or acts of worship. By studying the scriptures one is drawn closer to the Lord. He learns about God. He studies about Christ and learns that he was willing to offer himself up for the sins of the world. He will discover how the church was established, and will learn God's laws that should govern his life. Such study will better prepare him to live the Christian life and will enable him to teach others both publicly and privately.

One needs to study the Bible at home, and that,

daily. He is to feast upon the word, or else he will die spiritually. Surely one cannot live on the spiritual food that he receives on the Lord's day. This is important but he needs to partake of it every day. As one reads the written word of God, in this way the Lord speaks to him and reveals unto him what he should do to be faithful and to go to heaven. Surely, this is of importance to every Christian.

The apostle Paul said, "Study to shew thyself approved unto God, a workman that needeth not to be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth" (II Timothy 2:15). Please notice what Paul just said. First: study. That is, concentrate, meditate, ponder that which has been written. Next, he admonishes the individual; he says to "Study to shew **thyself** approved unto God . . ." One shouldn't be so concerned about the other fellow that he neglects himself. Thirdly, he points out that we should study in order that we might be **approved** of God, for how can one be approved of the Lord if he fails or refuses to study? Going on, he says that we should study in order that we might be workmen. If we know what the Bible teaches then we can do a greater work for the Lord. If we study the scriptures as we ought then it will keep us from being ashamed. We'll see that there is really no need to be ashamed of God, of Christ, of the gospel, of the church, and of Christianity. And finally, he says that we ought to study in order that we might rightly divide the word of truth. Why do many people go back to the Law of Moses and try to bind the Ten Commandments on the people today? It is because they have not studied the Bible and therefore have not learned to rightly divide the word of

truth. So Paul has a lot to say about studying the scriptures and we need to heed his admonition. If we should, we would be less ignorant about many important things.

In order to gain more from our Bible study, whether in worship or in our home, let us notice some rules for Bible study:

1. **Who is speaking?** Always ask this question when reading a verse of scripture. Was it Moses, Christ, Paul, or who? This will help us to better understand the message.
2. **When was it spoken?** Was it spoken under the Law of Moses or under the Law of Christ? This makes a great difference, and in order to properly understand the scriptures, they must be rightly divided according to time and laws involved.
3. **To whom is the writer speaking?** Was he speaking to someone of his day or is he speaking to us?
4. **Be systematic in your study.** Do not just open the Bible anywhere and begin to read but study the Bible by book, or by subject.
5. **Is it figurative or literal?** You'll have to watch the language of the Bible and not accept the literal passages to be figurative and the figurative ones to be literal. Some people want to make everything literal. We must judge carefully by

the context so that we may understand what is meant.

6. Use some good common sense. The Bible teaches by command, example, and necessary inference. Don't jump to conclusions and make the Bible teach something it doesn't, or array the scriptures against each other. They do not contradict, but rather they harmonize.
7. Always read the context. Do not take one verse of scripture and isolate it from all other passages just to try to make it justify some theory that you have. Study diligently to learn all the Bible has to say on a given subject, and then accept it fully.

Yes, we have a great deal to learn about the Bible, and how to study the Bible. All of us, regardless of how much we have studied the scriptures, need to study more and more both in worship and in our homes. The more we understand the Bible, the better we will be able to apply its teachings to our lives.

YOUR EXAMINATION

1. What should be the text book for Bible study?

2. Many people replace it with what? _____
3. Through studying the Bible we will learn what about the creeds of men? _____
4. Is Bible study a part of worship? _____
5. Should it be a part of our daily lives? _____
6. What are some of the things we will learn through a study of the Bible? _____

7. Is it enough to study God's word on Sunday?

8. God speaks to us through the written _____
9. What is commanded in II Timothy 2:15? _____

10. To whom does this passage apply? _____
11. We are to study so that we may be _____ of God; so that we will be _____; so that

we need not be _____

12. The reason for so much confusion in religion today is that many do not rightly divide the word. True or False: _____
13. What are seven basic rules for Bible study? _____

14. Will a person learn much from his study if he begins just wherever the book falls open? _____
15. In what three ways does the Bible teach? _____

16. The scriptures do not _____ but rather they _____.
17. Through understanding the Bible we will be able to apply its _____ to our _____

KEY 19

PRAYER

Prayer is another great subject. It is important because it is a part of worship and likewise a phase of the Christian life. In either case, prayer could not be left out.

Christ said, “. . . men ought always to pray, and not to faint” (Luke 18:1). Paul wrote, “pray without ceasing” (I Thessalonians 5:17). In both cases, Christ and Paul are saying that one should pray at every opportunity. Well, how can this be done? If we pray like some people think we must, then this would be impossible because they would have us going through a lot of ceremony. But one may pray publicly or privately. He may pray audibly or he may pray silently. Anywhere, at anytime, one may breathe a prayer. This is what the Bible teaches.

When we pray we should always pray according to the will of the Lord. Hence, John says, “And this is the confidence that we have in him, that, if we ask anything according to his will, he heareth us” (I John 5:14). Some people cannot understand why God doesn't answer their prayers. Well, here is the answer. In order for God to hear and answer prayers, they must be in keeping with his will. We may think many times they are, but they may not be. It could be that we are asking for something that we ought not to have, or are asking contrary to the teaching of God's word.

Someone has said that God answers every prayer. To some prayers he says yes and to some he says no, but he answers every one. There is a truth to that because God most surely hears us but before he will answer our prayers as we prayed them, they must be in harmony with his will. This is why we need to study the scriptures more and learn how to pray better, for so many times we do not know how to pray and therefore our prayers are weak and amiss from the beginning.

Jesus condemned praying when it is done only to be heard and to be seen of men. Neither must our prayers be long in order for the Lord to hear them and they most certainly do not have to be full of repetition. Christ would have us to pray from the heart, sincerely, and not only to ask his blessings upon us but to likewise express gratitude for all that he has already done (Matthew 6).

What about the sinner? Does God hear a sinner's prayer? Will he save one through prayer only? The best answer is the one that is recorded in John 9:31: "Now we know that God heareth not sinners: but if any man be a worshipper of God, doeth his will, him he heareth." Hence, the Bible does not teach that God will hear the sinner in the sense that he will answer his prayer and save him. If the sinner wants to be a Christian then let him obey the gospel so that he can pray as a child of God. But notice, he must meet two conditions. First, he must be a worshipper of God, and second, he must be a doer of his will. This is plain enough, isn't it?

Another important role that prayer plays is in the case of the erring Christian confessing his faults and praying to God that he might be healed spiritually. James says,

“Confess your faults one to another, and pray one for another, that ye may be healed. The effectual fervent prayer of a righteous man availeth much” (James 5:16).

Remember when you pray:

1. Pray for the sick and afflicted.
2. Pray for the leaders of your nation, and all nations.
3. Pray with thanksgiving for all that God has done.
4. Pray for the Lord's people everywhere.
5. Pray for the necessities of life.
6. Pray for the forgiveness of your sins.
7. Pray for the strength and courage to carry on.
8. Pray always in the name of Christ.

Worship the Lord through prayer and serve God through prayer. It can be a mighty weapon for you and others. You'll find that you can remove mountains of problems through it. It can make a great difference in your life if only applied as it should be. Remember, God speaks to us only through his word, and the only way in which we can speak to him is through prayer. It is a wonderful privilege, and we need to take advantage of it often.



YOUR EXAMINATION

1. Why is prayer important? _____

2. Christ said men should always _____
3. Paul said, _____ without ceasing.
4. Many people think that in order to pray, one must go through much _____
5. What does the Bible teach on the subject? _____

6. Our prayers must be in harmony with what? _____

7. Does God hear all prayers? _____
8. If our prayers aren't answered in the affirmative, does that mean that they have not been answered? _____
9. How can we learn better how to pray? _____

10. Jesus condemned those who would pray for what purpose? _____

11. Must our prayers be long and repetitious? _____
12. Does God save a sinner through prayer? _____
13. What two conditions must one meet before his prayer will be heard? _____

14. The erring Christian is to use prayer in what way? _____

15. List some things for which we should pray _____

16. How does God speak to us? _____
17. How do we speak to God? _____
18. Prayer will remove what? _____
19. Our prayers must be in whose name? _____

KEY 20

SINGING

Christianity is a unique religion inasmuch as it is a singing religion. The Bible teaches that singing is an act of worship. Therefore, one of the primary purposes of the Lord's people assembling on the first day of the week is so that they may sing praises to God.

The apostle Paul says, ". . . speaking to yourselves in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing and making melody in your heart to the Lord" (Ephesians 5:19). What is Paul saying? He is saying that this is to be a group thing, that it is to be group participation, or congregational singing. Furthermore, he is pointing out that each one is to speak to the other in psalms, hymns, and spiritual songs. Psalms, hymns, and spiritual songs are all just different kinds of songs. However, all of them must be spiritual in nature, with the ability to draw one closer to the Lord. But how is the melody to be made? It is to be made in the heart. And to whom is it to be directed? To man, or to the Lord? To the Lord, of course.

Another similar statement is also made by Paul, when he says, "Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly in all wisdom; teaching and admonishing one another in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing with grace in your hearts to the Lord" (Colossians 3:16). There is just one thing that needs particular attention in this verse,

and that is that Paul says that we are to teach and admonish one another through our singing. Singing, then, is for the purpose of glorifying and worshipping the Lord, teaching and exhorting those who are present, and in order to inspire and build up those who are participating.

There is one all-important question that always arises when singing is discussed, and that is, should mechanical music be used in conjunction with the singing? The answer is no, but we'll want to notice some arguments for mechanical music, and then show you by the scriptures that they are insufficient to prove the point.

First, we must understand that God once had a law, the law of Moses, but in due time he took it out of the way in order to give a new and better law through Christ. Under the first law mechanical music was permitted, but also there were animal sacrifices and many other things common to that time. Under the new law a new plan of worship was given and it called for singing. But someone is ready to say, "But it doesn't say **not** to use mechanical music." But it does, inasmuch as it tells us what to do and that eliminates the other acts. The very fact that singing is commanded does away with the idea of mechanical music. For example, we are told to partake of unleavened bread in remembrance of the body of Christ and the fruit of the vine in remembrance of the blood of Christ. Now one might say, "But it doesn't say **not** to use cake and Coca-Cola for partaking the Lord's Supper so I'll use those." But it does tell us what to use, and that would automatically eliminate cake and Coca-Cola.

Going further, the Lord would have his **creation** to worship him instead of something that we have created. In

this way he is glorified. If we worshipped him with our inventions then we would be honored. That is why the Hebrew writer said, "By him therefore let us offer the sacrifice of praise to God continually, that is, the fruit of our lips giving thanks to his name" (Hebrews 13:15).

As we have already noted, Ephesians 5:19 and Colossians 3:16 say specifically that the melody is to be made in the heart, not on some mechanical instrument. The argument might be made that in the Urdu language for instance it says to sing and play. Yes, but even Urdu scholars will admit that this scripture has been mistranslated, and is even wrong according to Urdu grammar. In the Greek originals, to which we must always return when translations are questioned, only singing is commanded.

Another says, "But we like it." Well, we may like many things but that doesn't mean that we can bring them into worship. "What about music in heaven?" My friend, we are not in heaven now, so we'll have to be content for the present with what the Lord has asked us to do on the earth. But regardless, no earthly thing will be in heaven so we can be sure that no **mechanical** music will be there.

There are many arguments offered for mechanical music in worship but none of them will stand under the tests of the scriptures. Mechanical music may be good and fine in the home, at a wedding, etc., but the Lord has not commanded it in worship, therefore we must leave it off. In all of these verses of scripture that mention singing in the New Testament, no where is included or suggested the use of mechanical music. So why do people use it and why do people want it? Because they have seen others use it and they think it is the thing to do. They never

question whether it is right or wrong. But each one should study his Bible for himself and see what it teaches. If it teaches the use of mechanical music in worship then go ahead and use it. If it does not teach it then leave it off, or else be damned (Revelation 22:18, 19).

Christians are to sing. All admit this. And all admit that the Lord may be worshipped without mechanical music. Why take a chance? Be on the safe side. Do only that which you know is right.

YOUR EXAMINATION

1. Christianity is a _____ religion.
2. What is one of the primary purposes for Christians gathering on the Lord's day? _____

3. What does Ephesians 5:19 say about singing? _____

4. Name three types of songs: _____

5. Where is the melody to be made? _____
6. We are to _____ and _____ one another through our singing.
7. What question always arises when the subject of singing is discussed? _____
8. Was mechanical music commanded under the law of Moses? _____
9. Was mechanical music commanded when the new law was given? _____
10. God wants his _____ to worship him.

11. He does not ask us to worship him through our own _____
12. We are to offer praises to him as the _____ of our _____
13. What does Ephesians 5:19 say in the Urdu translation? _____
14. Is this correct? _____
15. To what must all translations be compared when the translation is questioned? _____
16. Will there be physical mechanical instruments in heaven? _____
17. Is it wrong to play an instrument in the home?

18. Is mechanical music ever included or suggested in the commands to sing in worship to God in the New Testament? _____
19. We must follow the scriptures on this subject or else be _____

KEY 21

THE LORD'S SUPPER

The Bible teaches that Christians are to assemble each first day of the week to partake of the Lord's Supper. We have an example showing that the early Christians did this very thing. We read, "And upon the first day of the week, when the disciples came together to break bread, Paul preached unto them, ready to depart on the morrow; and continued his speech until midnight" (Acts 20:7).

What is the Lord's Supper? It is a feast, a supper, a memorial that is partaken of in remembrance of the Lord. The bread is to be partaken of in remembrance of the body of Christ and the cup is to be partaken of in remembrance of the blood of Christ. Christ himself instituted this supper, and the record says, "And as they were eating, Jesus took bread, and blessed it, and brake it, and gave it to the disciples, and said, Take eat; this is my body. And he took the cup, and gave thanks, and gave it to them saying, Drink ye all of it; For this is my blood of the new testament, which is shed for many for the remission of sins" (Matthew 26: 26-28).

In writing to the Corinthians, Paul first of all rebuked them for turning the Lord's Supper into a riotous feast and then he went on to show the real purpose of it. Let us read for ourselves. "Now in this that I declare unto you I praise you not, that ye come together not for the

better, but for the worse. For first of all, when ye come together in the church, I hear that there be divisions among you, and I partly believe it. For there must be also heresies among you, that they which are approved may be made manifest among you. When ye come together into one place, this is not to eat the Lord's supper. For in eating every one taketh before other his own supper: and one is hungry, and another is drunken. What? have ye not houses to eat and to drink in? or despise ye the church of God, and shame them that have not? For I have received of the Lord that which also I delivered unto you, That the Lord Jesus the same night in which he was betrayed took bread: And when he had given thanks, he brake it, and said, Take, eat: this is my body, which is broken for you: this do in remembrance of me. After the same manner also he took the cup, when he had supped, saying. This cup is the new testament in my blood: this do ye, as often as ye drink it, in remembrance of me. For as often as ye eat this bread, and drink this cup, ye do shew the Lord's death till he come. Wherefore whosoever shall eat this bread, and drink this cup of the Lord, unworthily, shall be guilty of the body and blood of the Lord. But let a man examine himself and so let him eat of that bread, and drink of that cup. For he that eateth and drinketh unworthily, eateth and drinketh damnation to himself, not discerning the Lord's body. For this cause many are weak and sickly among you, and many sleep" (I Corinthians 11: 17-30).

Let us notice some truths in the foregoing scriptures:

1. Paul condemned the Corinthians for there being

divisions among them.

2. He rebuked them for using the Lord's Supper as a means of having a feast. They were told that they were to eat their meals at home, but that when they came together to partake of the Lord's Supper they should gather only to worship God, not to feast.
3. He explained unto them that he had received of the Lord that which he had given them.
4. He quoted the Lord's words in relation to instituting the supper.
5. Those who partake of it unworthily will be guilty of the body and blood of Christ. In other words, the unfaithful Christian will be lost.
6. So the partaker should examine himself beforehand to see if he is worthy to partake of it. That is, he ought to make things right with God before he comes to the solemn occasion.
7. In going on and partaking of it as an erring Christian or as an unfaithful Christian, one is eating and drinking damnation to himself. That is to say that in such a case the Lord's Supper will not blot out his sins and save him, but he'll be lost anyway unless he repents.

The partaking of the Lord's Supper is a serious thing. It is an holy and sacred thing. It should be done in all reverence and humility, remembering Christ's sacrifice.

The Christian is not only to partake of it every first day of the week in order to worship the Lord, but it is to be done to help him remember Christ until he comes again. How can one remember him if he is not mindful enough to partake of the Lord's Supper each Lord's day? Once a year is not enough, or once a month, or even once every two weeks. The Christian is to partake of it each first day of the week in order that he might remain true, loyal, and faithful to him until he comes.

YOUR EXAMINATION

1. Who is commanded to assemble to partake of the Lord's Supper? _____
2. When are they to assemble? _____
3. How often are they to assemble? _____
4. Who commanded this supper? _____
5. What is the "Lord's Supper?" _____

6. What two items constitute it? _____
7. What does the bread call to our minds? _____

8. What do we remember when we drink of the fruit of the vine? _____
9. What had the Christians in Corinth made of the supper? _____
10. Partaking of the supper helps us to remember the _____ of Christ.
11. Through the supper we look forward to what?

12. If one partakes unworthily he eats and drinks what? _____
13. We must make all things right with God before doing what? _____
14. Partaking of the supper should be done in all _____ and _____ remembering Christ's _____
15. Can one remember Christ if he does not remember him enough to partake of the Lord's Supper each Sunday? _____
16. Is once a month often enough? _____
17. We, as Christians, are to partake of the supper in order to remain _____ , _____ , and _____ until he comes.

KEY 22

GIVING

If the Bible clearly teaches anything, it teaches giving. The scriptures are full of the subject. But we want to notice especially that God has commanded Christians to lay by in store each first day of the week. That is another way of saying that Christians are to give, or contribute, each Lord's day. Paul says, "Upon the first day of the week let every one of you lay by him in store, as God hath prospered him, that there be no gatherings when I come" (I Corinthians 16:2).

Let us analyze what Paul had just said as we consider it phrase by phrase:

1. "Upon the first day of the week." This is when the giving is to take place. But why this day instead of some other? Well, it seems that this would be the most convenient time to do so, inasmuch as this is the day Christians are to meet anyway in order to worship God. For sure, some want to take up a collection every time they have a meeting, but the man of God specifies the first day of the week, or the Lord's day. And that is when we should do it if we are going to be scriptural.

2. "Let every one of you." To whom would this refer? Since he is writing to Christians, we naturally conclude that he is saying that every Christian should give. Since Christians are those who have obeyed the gospel and have become members of the Lord's kingdom, then they are the ones who are to spread the truth. This work requires money, so Christians are to give in order that the work of the church might go on.
3. "Lay by in store." This simply suggests that Christians are to give of that which they have. If it is money then they are to give money. However, it could have reference to many things, such as food, and other possessions that could be given.
4. "As God hath prospered him." The Christian is to give only as he has prospered. If he has not prospered, he is not expected to give. But if he has prospered, he is not to rob the Lord of his portions. This is where the real danger lies. But here is a suggestion on how much to give. Under the old law the Jews had to give at least a tenth of all that they made, but since we are living under such a better law, and since we are blessed even more with better promises, then how could we claim to be Christians and give less than a tenth of our earnings? Therefore, we should want to give more.

5. "That there be no gatherings when I come." Paul told the Corinthians that they were to lay by on the first day of the week so they would have their offering ready when he came to disperse it among those who had need. Today we are to give on the first day of the week so that when money is needed to preach the gospel it will be ready to be used, not that the work of the Lord might suffer because it is not ready.

So you see that there is a great deal to be learned about scriptural giving. This is true of I Corinthians 16:2, but there are two other passages to which we need likewise to give some attention. In writing to the Corinthians a second time, Paul said, "But this I say, He which soweth sparingly shall reap also sparingly; and he which soweth bountifully shall reap also bountifully. Every man according as he purposeth in his heart, so let him give; not grudgingly, or of necessity: for God loveth a cheerful giver" (II Corinthians 9:6, 7). The lesson is: "The less you give, the less you are blessed, but the more you give, the more you'll receive." Furthermore, the Christian is to give as he has purposed. He is to make up his mind concerning how much he is going to give even before the worship begins, and then when the time comes to give he is to "execute his decision." To give in this way will help him to keep from giving grudgingly or feeling that he must give out of necessity, and will help him to be a cheerful giver.

In conjunction with the foregoing statements, the Christian should remember the words of the Lord, "It is

more blessed to give than to receive" (Acts 20:35). Some would turn this around and make it say that it is more blessed to receive than it is to give. Let us not be guilty of this.

If one is not going to give as the Bible teaches he can hardly say that he is a Christian. He should however learn to give more and more, not only of his means, but of himself as well, and he will be rewarded with blessings in this world, and one day the Lord will reward him with eternal life. Remember, man reaps only as he sows.

YOUR EXAMINATION

1. Is "giving" a Bible subject? _____
2. Which people are commanded to give? _____
3. When, and how often, are we to give? _____

4. How often do most denominations take up collections? _____
5. Is this practice supported by the scriptures? _____
6. Are all Christians commanded to give? _____
7. What are we to give? _____
8. If a person has not prospered anything during the past week, is he under obligation to give anything? _____
9. We must be careful not to _____ God.
10. How much was each one to give under the law of Moses? _____
11. Why should we, living under the law of Christ, give more? _____

12. Why are we to give regularly on the first day of the week? _____
13. If we sow sparingly, how will we reap? _____
14. We are to _____ to give in our hearts.
15. Is it wrong to give grudgingly? _____
16. God loves a _____ giver.
17. "It is more blessed to _____ than to _____."
18. Can one claim to be a Christian if he doesn't give scripturally? _____
19. What blessings come to us in return for our giving? _____

KEY 23

CHRISTIAN LIVING

One is not born into this physical world a Christian. Neither is one a Christian simply because he says he is one. But in order to become one he must obey the gospel of Christ and in order to remain one he must live the Christian life.

On the day of Pentecost, after the first converts had been made, the record declares, "And they continued steadfastly in the apostles' doctrine and fellowship, and in breaking bread, and in prayers" (Acts 2:42).

Most of the New Testament is written to admonish and encourage Christians to be faithful to the Lord. First, let us read a number of general statements. For instance, "Therefore, my beloved brethren, be ye steadfast, unmovable, always abounding in the work of the Lord, forasmuch as ye know that your labour is not in vain in the Lord" (I Corinthians 15:58). James says, "But be ye doers of the word, and not hearers only, deceiving your own selves" (James 1:22). Then we have this statement, "work out your own salvation with fear and trembling" (Philippians 2:12).

Next we want to get more specific with what is expected of those who are going to live the Christian life. One important phase of his duty is worship to God. The Christian is to assemble each first day of the week to

praise God, and hence, he is exhorted, “. . . not forsaking the assembling of ourselves together, as the manner of some is; but exhorting one another: and so much the more, as ye see the day approaching” (Hebrews 10:25). He is to practice pure religion and this includes helping those in need. Listen to James, as he says, “Pure religion and undefiled before God and the Father is this, to visit the fatherless and widows in their affliction and to keep himself unspotted from the world” (James 1:27). He is to be instrumental in reaching the lost with the gospel. For this reason Christ has commanded us to preach or teach the gospel and Paul says that we are to preach the word (Mark 16:15; II Timothy 4:2).

Living for the Lord has two sides to it. There are those things that one is not to do, and there are other things that must be found in one's life. Paul calls our attention to this as he discusses the works of the flesh and the fruit of the Spirit. We read, “Now the works of the flesh are manifest, which are these; Adultery, fornication, uncleanness, lasciviousness, idolatry, witchcraft, hatred, variance, emulations, wrath, strife, seditions, heresies, envyings, murders, drunkenness, revellings, and such like: of the which I tell you before, as I have also told you in time past, that they which do such things shall not inherit the kingdom of God. But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, longsuffering, gentleness, goodness, faith, meekness, temperance: against such there is no law. And they that are Christ's have crucified the flesh with the affections and lusts. If we live in the Spirit, let us also walk in the Spirit. Let us not be desirous of vain glory, provoking one another, envying one another”(Galatians

5:19-26). Again, the apostle says, "For the grace of God that bringeth salvation hath appeared to all men, teaching us that, denying ungodliness and worldly lusts, we should live soberly, righteously, and godly in this present world" (Titus 2:11, 12). The Christian is not only told what to do, but he is also told what not to do, and both are equally important to Christian living.

Let us be even more specific concerning some of the things that make up Christian living. One must first love God (Matthew 22:37). He must love his neighbor as himself (Matthew 22:39). He must respect the word of God (Revelation 22:18, 19). He must pray (I Thessalonians 5:17). He must pay his debts (Romans 13:8). He must be honest in all things (Romans 12:17). He must support his family (I Timothy 5:8). And in general again, he must do the will of the Father in all (Matthew 7:21). Paul said that we are to do all in the name of the Lord (Colossians 3:17).

It is not easy to live the Christian life. Just to become a Christian does not assure one of a job or an easy life. It does not mean that he won't have any problems or persecutions. But to become a Christian and to live the Christian life does mean that one will be saved and the Lord will bless him throughout life and in the world to come in his own way.

Therefore, one should count the price before becoming a Christian. And if he does decide that he wants to be one, he should put everything that he has into it. He should not be a hypocrite but he should be dedicated to the Lord. He ought not to deceive people but he should be sincere and ever strive to help mankind. If he fails to live faithful

then he will fall away and will be lost.

The Bible teaches that only those who live the faithful Christian life will receive the prize. When one enters the Christian race he ought to enter it to run for the reward and he should not stop until he receives it. Hence, the Christian is promised this: "Be thou faithful unto death, and I will give thee a crown of life" (Revelation 2:10).

YOUR EXAMINATION

1. Is one born into this physical world a Christian?

2. How does one become a Christian? _____

3. To what people is most of the New Testament directed? _____
4. We are to be _____, _____ always abounding in the work of the Lord.
5. The Christian must not fail to meet with his fellow Christians each Lord's day to _____ God.
6. Practicing pure religion includes helping those in _____
7. Christians must do what with the gospel? _____

8. What two sides does Christianity have? _____

9. Are we doing enough just to abstain from evil?

10. Are we doing enough just to practice good works? _____
11. What are some of the works of the flesh? _____
12. What are some of the works of the Spirit? _____
13. How should we live in this present world? _____
14. What are some more specific commands to the Christian? _____
15. Is it easy to live the Christian life? _____
16. If we are Christians are we assured of a job and an easy life? _____
17. Are Christians protected from persecution? _____
18. What rewards are promised Christians? _____

KEY 24

THE ERRING CHRISTIAN

Can a Christian fall from grace? In other words, can he so sin as to finally be lost? Many would say no; but the Bible teaches an emphatic yes. That doesn't mean that the Christian must fall away and become unfaithful, but it does mean that he could, that it is possible, and that as it has happened before, it could happen again.

Every warning that is to be found in the New Testament is suggestive of the fact that a Christian can become an erring child of God. If not, then why are the warnings there? Every positive command is likewise suggestive of the fact that one can so sin as to be lost. For what if a Christian failed to obey such commands? Would it not mean that he would be disobeying God and in so doing would be lost because of it? Of course.

Not only are the foregoing facts true, but to further support this truth the Bible gives instructions that an erring Christian must follow if he is to be restored to his first love. James says, "Confess your faults one to another, that ye may be healed. The effectual prayer of a righteous man availeth much" (James 5:16). Although repentance is not specifically mentioned here nevertheless it is necessarily implied. Such an individual must turn away from his sins, and then confess them. And finally he is to pray in order that he might be healed spiritually or forgiven.

This leads us to say this. If one has sinned in his heart he should repent of that sin, confess it to God, and ask his forgiveness. But if one's sin is known by a neighbor or a friend, then he should take the matter to that person and likewise settle it. However, if one has sinned in such a way that is generally known by the church and the people of the community, he should take the matter before the church. Repentance would naturally lead him to do this, and James 5:16 implies that there are others involved in that the faults or sins should be confessed one to another, and then prayer should be offered up to the Lord in order that forgiveness might be received. So one's confession should be just as public as the sin; no more and no less. This is what the Lord would have an individual to do if he is going to receive forgiveness for his sins. Otherwise, he will be lost.

There is more than one example of this to be found in the New Testament. The first one we will notice is that of Simon the Sorcerer. It seemed that Simon was somewhat of a magician or fortune teller and had the people deceived. When Philip came to Samaria to preach, many of them believed and obeyed the gospel. Simon was among this number. But let us read the account: "Then Simon himself believed also: and when he was baptized, he continued with Philip, and wondered, beholding the miracles and signs which were done. Now when the apostles which were at Jerusalem heard that Samaria had received the word of God, they sent unto them Peter and John: who, when they were come down, prayed for them, that they might receive the Holy Ghost: (For as yet he was fallen upon none of them: only they were baptized in the name of the Lord Jesus).

Then laid they their hands on them, and they received the Holy Ghost. And when Simon saw that through laying on of the apostles' hands the Holy Ghost was given, he offered them money, saying, Give me also this power, that on whomsoever I lay hands, he may receive the Holy Ghost. But Peter said unto him, Thy money perish with thee, because thou hast thought that the gift of God may be purchased with money. Thou hast neither part nor lot in this matter: for thy heart is not right in the sight of God. Repent therefore of this thy wickedness, and pray God, if perhaps the thought of thine heart may be forgiven thee. For I perceive that thou art in the gall of bitterness, and in the bond of iniquity. Then answered Simon, and said, Pray ye to the Lord for me, that none of these things which ye have spoken come upon me" (Acts 8:13-24). Now what do we have? We see that a Christian had sinned. What instructions was he given? He was told to repent and pray to God that the thoughts of his heart might be forgiven. Did he? Yes, inasmuch as he asked Peter to pray for him that such things might not come upon him. That is, he confessed his wrong and desired forgiveness.

There is also the story of the prodigal son in Luke 15. He was with his father but he left. Finally, in the depths of sin he came to himself and determined to return. He said that he had sinned and asked that his father receive him back. His father did. Therefore he was as a child of God who had fallen away, but he repented of his sins and confessed his faults. Then he asked his father for forgiveness, and naturally he was forgiven.

When a Christian sins, falls away, or quits the church, he is lost in that condition. He can continue that way and

be eternally lost or he can repent, confess his faults, and pray to God for forgiveness and thus go on to live for the Lord. One can't become a Christian and live just any old way and go to heaven. If he is to receive the crown of life he must live according to what the Bible teaches.

YOUR EXAMINATION

1. Can a Christian fall from grace? _____
2. Every warning to be found in the New Testament implies what? _____

3. If a Christian fails to obey God, in what state will he find himself? _____
4. What three steps must the erring Christian take to be forgiven? _____

5. If one has sinned only in his heart, what should he do? _____
6. If his sin is known by his neighbor, what should he do? _____
7. If one's sin is known by the church, what should he do? _____
8. What will become of the one who refuses to return to God? _____
9. What did Simon the sorcerer try to do? _____

10. What did Peter say to him? _____

11. What response did Simon make? _____

12. Who does the father represent in the story of the prodigal son? _____
13. Who does the son represent? _____
14. What did the son do in leaving the safety of his father's house? _____
15. What did he do when he realized his plight? _____

16. What did his father do? _____
17. A Christian is lost when he does what? _____

18. If he continues that way what will become of him? _____
19. What must he do before he can live for the Lord again? _____
20. If one is to receive a crown of life, how must he live? _____

KEY 25

FASTING

In many parts of the world fasting plays an important role in the lives of those who are religious. Fasting is not new, however, because God's people have fasted on certain occasions through the ages. The question is, does the Lord command fasting of his people today?

Before we answer the proposed question, let us make it clear that there is nothing wrong with fasting as long as it is not carried to extremes. On the other hand, most of the people who supposedly fast do not actually fast. They merely mock the act of fasting. They put on a show. They act as a hypocrite inasmuch as it is done for the benefit of man and not in order to benefit the one who is fasting or to glorify the Lord. Nowhere does the Bible teach that anybody ever began a fast just to be different, or in an effort to seek revenge or to cause someone to succumb to his desires. Neither does the Bible ever teach that the people of God fasted in certain hours of the day, whereas the rest of the time could be spent in eating and drinking. Abstaining from eating and drinking during the daylight hours, and then being gluttonous all night is far from fasting. It is mockery of the act and of one's own intelligence.

When we turn to the Bible not only do we find that many people of the Old Testament fasted, but we have the example of Christ fasting. On one occasion he went forty

days and nights without food and water (Matthew 4). He likewise taught his disciples to fast, but not as the hypocrites. Christ taught, "Moreover when ye fast, be not, as the hypocrites, of a sad countenance: for they disfigure their faces, that they may appear unto men to fast. Verily I say unto you, They have their reward. But thou, when thou fastest, anoint thine head, and wash thy face; that thou appear not unto men to fast, but unto thy Father which is in secret: and thy Father, which seeth in secret, shall reward thee openly" (Matthew 6:16-18). So the Lord didn't condemn fasting, provided it was for the right purpose. As a matter of fact, it would seem that he expected the disciples to pray and fast. He merely condemned the practice of fasting to be seen of men as was common among the religious hypocrites of that day: Christ said that our fasting need not even be known of men, but that if we are sincere, God will be pleased by our fasting.

Fasting is nowhere bound on Christians throughout the pages of the New Testament. Christians are not commanded to fast on any certain occasion. They are not asked to fast in order to worship the Lord. It seems that this is one thing that Christ has left entirely up to individual Christians. If they desire to fast then they may. If they feel the need to fast then that is their privilege. But it is not commanded as such, and therefore one Christian is not to strive to bind it on another Christian. If he does, then he is doing wrong.

It is true that we have an example of the Lord fasting, but he did not command us to so fast. If someone tries to bind it on others because Christ fasted, would he also have every Christian to be crucified as Christ was? Unless fasting

will serve the purpose of strengthening our faith, and of drawing us closer to God, it is of no value to us whatsoever.

But why fast? It seems that the Lord fasted in order to draw closer to God, to be made stronger, to be able to think and concentrate more on God and spiritual matters, to overcome Satan. Likewise, it would appear in the Lord's remarks to the disciples that this was his concept of fasting on their part. They were not to fast with the idea in mind that everyone else would benefit from it, but rather that they would be helped.

Why should Christians fast today? In order to get away from the material and the physical things and to set one's mind on things of a spiritual nature; to draw nigh unto the Lord; to have the opportunity to pray more; to receive strength of the Lord; to overcome some obstacle; to make a decision; to be more holy. These would be but a few of the reasons for fasting.

It is well known that little fasting is done among Christians of our day, or those who would claim to be Christians. No doubt this is a mistake. While fasting may not be commanded that still does not mean that there is no place for it. There is a place for fasting, provided we do not fall into the pitfalls of others and carry it to extremes and allow it to condemn us rather than benefit us. Christians everywhere would do well to fast, not to be seen of men but to be seen of God. It would not be necessary for it to be known as far as the world is concerned but God will know about it and will surely bless the individual who so does.

If you are fasting because of some custom, to lose weight, to glory in it, etc., then you are fasting in vain. But if you are fasting because you sincerely want to draw closer

to the Lord, then it will benefit you. Think on these things.

YOUR EXAMINATION

1. Is fasting a new thing? _____
2. Is it a common practice among people throughout the world? _____
3. Is it wrong to be extreme in fasting? _____
4. Many people fast to be seen of whom? _____
5. Is God pleased with this? _____
6. Is it real fasting when one abstains during the day and has a gluttonous feast at night? _____
7. Did Christ ever fast? _____
8. How did Christ say the hypocrites fast? _____

9. Against what did he warn his disciples? _____

10. Must our fasting be a public thing in order for God to know about it? _____
11. Are Christians commanded to fast on any certain occasion? _____

12. Is fasting a part of worship? _____
13. Is it wrong to fast? _____
14. Unless fasting does what two things, it is of no value to us? _____

15. Who is primarily to be benefited from fasting? _____
16. Why should Christians fast today? _____

17. Do most Christians fast today? _____
18. What are some vain reasons for fasting? _____

19. What results will be gained when we sincerely fast to draw near to God? _____

KEY 26

MARRIAGE

Marriage is as old as man. In the very beginning God laid down certain laws that would forever govern this holy relationship. The record says, "And the Lord God said, it is not good that the man should be alone; I will make him an help meet for him. And out of the ground the Lord God formed every beast of the field, and every fowl of the air; and brought them unto Adam to see what he would call them: and whatsoever Adam called every living creature, that was the name thereof. And Adam gave names to all cattle, and to the fowl of the air, and to every beast of the field; but for Adam there was not found an help meet for him. And the Lord God caused a deep sleep to fall upon Adam, and he slept: and he took one of his ribs, and closed up the flesh thereof; And the rib, which the Lord God had taken from man, made he a woman, and brought her unto the man. And Adam said, This is now bone of my bones, and flesh of my flesh; she shall be called Woman because she was taken out of Man. Therefore shall a man leave his father and his mother; and shall cleave unto his wife: and they shall be one flesh" (Genesis 2:18-24).

In the days of Christ we have this conversation, "The Pharisees also came unto him, tempting him, and saying unto him, Is it lawful for a man to put away his wife for every cause? And he answered and said unto them, Have

ye not read, that he which made them at the beginning made them male and female, And said, For this cause shall a man leave father and mother, and shall cleave to his wife: and they twain shall be one flesh? Wherefore they are no more twain, but one flesh. What therefore God hath joined together, let not man put asunder. They say unto him, Why did Moses then command to give a writing of divorcement, and to put her away? He saith unto them, Moses because of the hardness of your hearts suffered you to put away your wives: but from the beginning it was not so. And I say unto you, Whosoever shall put away his wife, except it be for fornication, and shall marry another, committeth adultery: and whoso marrieth her which is put away doth commit adultery" (Matthew 19:3-9).

Again, Christ said, "It hath been said, Whosoever shall put away his wife, let him give her a writing of divorcement: But I say unto you, That whosoever shall put away his wife, saving for the cause of fornication, causeth her to commit adultery: and whosoever shall marry her that is divorced committeth adultery" (Matthew 5:31, 32).

From the foregoing scriptures we can know these truths:

1. God ordained marriage.
2. He saw that it was not good that man should be alone but that he should have a help meet.
3. A man should leave father and mother and cleave unto his wife.

4. In marriage man and woman become one flesh.
5. Christ taught that from the beginning God intended that there be only one man and one woman in each marriage.
6. He also taught that whatsoever God had joined together let not man put asunder or separate.
7. He taught that divorce was permitted at one time because of the hardness of the hearts of the people, but from the beginning God never intended for such to be.
8. Christ gave but one exception for divorce and remarriage, and that was fornication.
9. If one seeks a divorce and then remarries where fornication is not involved, the guilty parties commit adultery.

According to the scriptures when one marries, it should be for life. One is not permitted to put away his wife for just any cause and neither is one allowed to take unto himself more than one partner.

Of course if one finds that his companion has committed fornication then he is allowed to marry again. Also, if one's companion has died then he may marry again. But outside of this there can be no remarriage, scripturally.

If an individual is living with more than one mate, or if one is living in adultery, then in order to become a

Christian he would have to put away all his wives except the first one and he would have to quit living in adultery.

For marriage is a divine institution and the purpose of it is to provide the individual with a companion, and for procreation, that is to replenish the earth. There are not only laws of God governing marriage itself, divorce, and re-marriage but the scriptures have certain instructions as well that pertain to the husband and wife, and to the children. The husband is to love the wife and the wife is to love the husband. The parents are to properly train their children in order that they might be reared right, and in order that they might have respect for their father and mother. Read Ephesians 6:1-4; 5:22-25; Colossians 3:18-21.

So let marriage be honorable in all. Respect the laws of God pertaining to it and you'll be richly rewarded. Otherwise, you will have only trouble and you'll have to pay for it in this world and in the world to come.

YOUR EXAMINATION

1. Since what time has marriage been common with man? _____
2. Why did God create woman? _____
3. Why was the being that was made from Adam's rib called "woman?" _____

4. When a man marries he is to leave _____
and _____ and _____ unto his _____
5. Is it lawful for a man to put away his wife for every cause? _____
6. What God has joined together, let not man _____

7. Why did the law of Moses permit divorce? _____

8. Was this God's intention from the beginning?

9. What is the one acceptable reason for divorce?

10. If one transgresses God's laws concerning

- marriage, he commits what sin? _____
11. Who ordained marriage? _____
12. In marriage man and woman become _____
13. How long should a marriage endure? _____
14. Is one free to remarry if his companion dies?

15. Is one permitted to have more than one mate?

16. Though the law of Moses occasionally permitted plurality of wives, are we living under that law today? _____
17. Does the law of Christ permit a man to have several wives? _____
18. What is the purpose of marriage? _____

19. Husbands and wives are commanded to _____
one another, and to _____ and _____
their children.

KEY 27

RELIGIOUS HOLIDAYS

In all religions there are holidays of feasting and joy. These days are usually celebrated each year and there is much ado over them. There is no exception with so-called Christianity. I say "so-called Christianity" because true Christianity does not include religious holidays. The Bible precisely condemns them. Paul said of the Galatians, in condemning them, "ye observe days, and months, and times, and years. I am afraid of you, lest I have bestowed upon you labour in vain" (Galatians 6:10, 11). And no doubt if Paul were here today he would say the same thing about most of those who claim to be Christian. Why? Because they observe days, months, times, and years, just like the foolish Galatians.

One such unscriptural holiday that most of the religious world observes is the birthday of Christ or what is called Christmas. The fact is, the Bible nowhere teaches that we should observe the day Christ was born, and the date of his birth has even been swallowed up in obscurity. It doesn't say that it was December 25 or any other specific day. The important thing is that he was born but even then we are not to remember his birth as much as his death because it was through his death, burial, and resurrection, that we have the remission of our sins and the hope of eternal life. If we are going to remember anything then we ought

to remember that, and do it not once a year but each first day of the week by partaking of the Lord's supper (Matthew 26:26-28; Acts 20:7). But who started Christmas? The Catholic church. They reasoned that many of the other saints had a mass to honor them but there was no mass for Christ. So they began what they called Christ-mass. And even it was based on a pagan festival. They turned a pagan festival, a feast in honor of Sol the Sun god, into Christmas. Then with the passing of years, it became a tradition, and today people accept Christmas as a scriptural holiday. But it's as far from the Bible as it can possibly be. Surely anyone who has read the Bible knows better than to try to make Santa Claus, Christmas trees, lavishing gifts, and many other things, scriptural. And those who are true Christians do not observe this religious holiday. They simply ignore it as they would some heathen celebration.

Another major religious holiday that is accepted by most of the so-called Christian world is that of Easter. It proposes to celebrate the day that Christ died, as well as his resurrection from the grave, which is actually the climax of Easter. Thus there is good Friday, "the day Christ died," and then Easter Sunday, "the day he arose." Prior to Easter Sunday there is the Lenten season, during which time many fast, or rather abstain from certain foods. It continues through Easter Sunday. Many of the denominations have what they call a Sunrise service on that Sunday and for the children there are Easter bunnies and egg hunts, the lilies, and most people want to dress up in what they call their "Easter clothes." But the whole thing is absurd. Especially is this true when you realize that it too grew out

of a pagan festival to greet the "goddess of spring." Thus the Catholic church took it and turned it into Easter. But why choose one day a year to celebrate the Lord's resurrection when true Christians are to do it every first day of the week the year around? (Acts 20:7; I Corinthians 11). Hence, Easter is unscriptural and Christians will not lower themselves to the point of having anything to do with it.

There are many other minor holidays through the year, but surely they are all in violation to the teaching of the Bible. The Lord recognized the danger in Christians observing days, months, years, etc., so he not only did not authorize the observance of any, but even condemned their observance. It's strange that man is so determined to have his way and will go on to celebrate such days anyway. Man is always seeking to justify his actions and you may find some who will try to tell you that such religious holidays are in keeping with the Bible. However, the majority observe such days without question because they are following the crowd. To them everybody else is doing it and so they think it must be all right.

Each one needs thus to study his Bible and see what it teaches concerning these days. If God's word upholds them, then that is fine, but if it does not authorize such, they should be shunned and the innocent should be warned against them. For we need to get away from customs, traditions, and the doctrines of men, and get back to what the Bible teaches. We can be sure only as long as we do what the scriptures teach. Certainly, it may be fun to go along with the world on these things, but who are we trying to please? Ourselves, man, or God?

Mark it down then that true Christians do not take

part in such religious festivals. If one says he is a Christian but he is engaged in such activity then that signifies that he is not what he claims to be. No, Christians do not abstain from such days just to be contrary or to be different, but because the Lord forbids that we engage in unscriptural celebrations.

YOUR EXAMINATION

1. Do true Christians observe religious holidays?

2. Why not? _____
3. What did Paul say to the Galatians? _____

4. Does the Bible teach that we should observe the birthday of Christ? _____
5. Do we know on which day he was born? _____
6. Who began the celebration of "Christmas?" _____

7. From what religious celebration did it begin? _____

8. What is the so-called "Easter" celebration? _____

9. What do people do during the Lenten season?

10. Where is the scripture to uphold such a practice?

11. What are some of the foolish traditions that are a part of "Easter?" _____

12. Easter grew out of what festival? _____
13. When are Christians commanded to celebrate the Lord's resurrection? _____
14. Do people try to justify the observance of religious holidays? _____
15. Can this be done? _____
16. What should we do to guard against following mere traditions? _____
17. If a person observes religious holidays is he a true Christian? _____

KEY 28

RELIGIOUS TITLES

Man is a lover of titles. He is continually searching for some new title to stick to the end of his name. There may be nothing wrong with this to a point, as long as they are of a non-religious nature, but when those titles take on religious significance then in all probability they are unscriptural.

The majority of the religious names and titles worn today by the religious world are unscriptural. They are unscriptural because the Bible no where upholds them or justifies such. As we are going to show, the Bible would condemn them for they are for the purpose of elevating man and giving him an office and a feeling of prominence that he does not deserve and should not have.

The name or title of Pope is as unscriptural as it can be. No where in the Bible is such a position upheld. There is no man on earth who can assume the position of being the head of the church. And those who would bow before such a man are condoning an unscriptural office and are therefore in error themselves. The Bible teaches that Christ is the head of the church, not some man (Colossians 1:18; Ephesians 1:22, 23).

Such names and titles as cardinal, bishop, and archbishop are likewise anti-scriptural. There is no foundation for such an organization as the Catholic church purports.

In reading the scriptures we learn that Christ is the head of the church and in each congregation of the church there is to be a plurality of elders and deacons, not that one group of men should rule over all the congregations or over the whole church. Paul exhorted Titus, "For this cause left I thee in Crete, that thou shouldest set in order the things that are wanting, and ordain elders in every city, as I had appointed thee" (Titus 1:5). And then he goes on to give the qualifications that one must have in order to be an elder or bishop, and one qualification was that the individual had to be married and have believing children. Paul mentions this also to Timothy in I Timothy 3. That would strike a hard blow at the Catholic church as well as many other religious organizations.

Another title that the Lord forbade was that of calling man father. Christ warned, "And call no man your father upon the earth: for one is your Father, which is in heaven" (Matthew 23:9). Those who would have men call them father, and those who would call man their father religiously, are directly disobeying the words of the Lord. Will we serve and obey God or men?

In conjunction with the foregoing command, Christ condemned the title of Rabbi being worn of men, for he explained, "But be not ye called Rabbi: for one is your Master, even Christ; and all ye are brethren" (Matthew 23:8). The same was said of "Master." Listen, "Neither be ye called masters: for one is your Master, even Christ" (Matthew 23:10). But scores call themselves Rabbi and Master. Therefore they are doing wrong according to Christ's word.

Thousands of others would be called Reverend,

Right Reverend, the Most Right Reverend, Doctor, etc., etc. But "Holy and reverend is his name" (Psalm 111:9). Now a question: Who would claim to be on par with God, or equal with God? But that is what such men are claiming when they would have their fellow men to look up to them and call them reverend. Could this be pleasing to God?

All such man-made names and titles, as well as others that might be used, are unscriptural because the Bible does not teach them or authorize them in any manner. One reason why they are wrong is because they would exalt man and place him in a position of being hallowed and worshipped. But man is not to worship man. All have sinned and all stand in need of salvation (Romans 3:23; Romans 5:8). Instead of one seeking to be served, he should want to serve (Matthew 11:23, 24). Peter would not permit Cornelius to bow before him in worship but explained, "Stand up; I myself also am a man" (Acts 10:25, 26). You know that if Peter could say such a thing then how much the more should all preachers of today be able to say the same.

One of the big problems in the religious world today lies in the fact that too many men are seeking to exalt themselves above everyone else, and thus they expect to be served. They think because of the titles they have given themselves that anything they say should be accepted as law and should never be questioned. How wrong they are! Another problem in the world is that of getting man to see the absurdity of bowing to any man, regardless of the titles he may wear. He should realize that he can read his Bible for himself, that he has a mind of his own, and that God does not require him to bow to any man but that he should obey only the Lord.

So mark it down that the man who wears such titles as Pope, cardinal, bishop, pastor, father, reverend, rabbi, master, etc., is not following the Lord. He might think he is but he is not, for in wearing such forbidden titles he has made a lord of himself. Which Lord will you worship and respect? the Lord of heaven and earth, or some man who has stolen the glory and the names that rightly belong to his creator?

YOUR EXAMINATION

1. Are most of the religious titles used today condoned by God? _____
2. Why are they unscriptural? _____
3. Why are such titles used? _____
4. No man on earth can assume the position of being _____ of the _____
5. Who is head of the church? _____
6. What title is given to the man who seeks to oust Christ from his seat of authority and honor?

7. What type of leadership is to be found in each congregation of Christ's church? _____

8. Is it scriptural to have one group of men to rule the entire church? _____
9. What is one qualification that must be met before one can be an elder in the church? _____

10. "And call no man your _____ upon the

earth: for one is your Father which is in heaven.”

11. Those who would call some man “Father” are disobeying what? _____
12. The title of _____ among men is condemned.
13. Why are we not to be called “Master?” _____
14. Can man be called “reverend” scripturally? _____
15. To whom does the passage refer: “Holy and reverend is his name?” _____
16. Those who would be “reverend” make themselves equal with _____
17. Why are such names and titles wrong for man to use? _____
18. We should seek to do what for our fellowman? _____
19. Would Peter allow men to worship him? _____
20. When one wears titles which should apply only to God or to Christ, what does he set himself up to be? _____

KEY 29

FALSE DOCTRINES

Not everything taught in the name of religion is the truth. Not every preacher or teacher that claims to be of God is of God. One may know whether a thing is the truth only by comparing it to what the Bible teaches. And you may find out if one is of God by trying him with the word of the Lord. John says, "Beloved, believe not every spirit, but try the spirits whether they are of God: because many false prophets have gone out into the world" (I John 4:1).

So let us briefly point out some false doctrines. They are not false simply because someone happens not to believe them, but because the Bible teaches that they are unscriptural. But see for yourself:

1. A false doctrine is that God has predestined a certain few to be saved and a certain number to be lost and that there is nothing that an individual can do to change his status. This is false because the Bible does not teach that God so deals with the individual, but with groups. He has foreordained and predestined to save the righteous and condemn the evil, but he has given man the right to decide which group he will belong to. If this were not true then the Bible would have been in vain and a waste of time. Paul says,

“According as he hath chosen us in him before the foundation of the world, that we should be holy and without blame before him in love: having predestined us unto the adoption of children by Jesus Christ to himself, according to the good pleasure of his will. To the praise of the glory of his grace, wherein he hath made us accepted in the beloved” (Ephesians 1:4-6). Thus, Paul is saying that he has predestined the righteous to be saved, but he does not say that he had predetermined which people will be in that righteous group. He leaves that for us to decide.

2. A false doctrine is that a baby is born in sin. In order to try to prove this many use the case of David, when he said, “Behold, I was shapen in iniquity: and in sin did my mother conceive me” (Psalm 51:5). However, David is not saying that he was born **with** sin but born in sin. There is a vast difference. Certainly, the world into which we are born is full of sin, and since all responsible people have sinned, then it could truly be said that we are “shapen in iniquity,” but nowhere is it stated that David, or any other baby, was born **full of sin**. To show you how absurd such a doctrine is, we have Christ teaching a lesson with little children. When the disciples asked who was the greatest in the kingdom he said, “And Jesus called a little child unto him, and set him in the midst of them, And said,

Verily I say unto you, except ye be converted, and become as little children, ye shall not enter into the kingdom of heaven. Whosoever therefore shall humble himself as this little child, the same is the greatest in the kingdom of heaven" (Matthew 18:1-4). Now if children are born with sin you know the Lord would not have exhorted his disciples to be like them. But a child is born without sin and remains without sin until he reaches the age of accountability. Then he is able to believe, repent of his sins, confess Christ with the mouth, and be baptized for the remission of sins as the Bible teaches (Mark 16:16; Acts 17:30; Romans 10:10; Acts 2:38). Without this a lost person cannot be saved and Christ never asks us to do something that is impossible. Since an infant is not capable of reasoning and learning the truth, it is only reasonable that until such time as he develops to the point of being able to comply with God's commands, he is in a safe state.

3. A false doctrine is that there are many churches and that one is as good as another. It is also said that the church isn't important. But the Bible says that there is one church and that it was so important to Christ that he shed his blood for it (Matthew 16:18; Ephesians 4:4; Acts 20:28). It's true that there are many man-made churches, that one is as good as another, and that they are not important but this cannot

be said about the church of Christ.

4. A false doctrine is that faith only saves. If it does, why does the Lord command one to repent, to confess, to be baptized, to live the Christian life, to do the works of God? Read James 2. Faith is only the foundation on which we build.
5. A false doctrine is that once one is saved he is always saved. Christ taught that one should be faithful unto death (Revelation 2:10). What if he is not faithful unto death? Would he not be lost? The truth is that the Bible nowhere teaches that one cannot fall from grace, but rather it teaches that he can.
6. A false doctrine is that miracles can be performed today. If so, where are they? Why not raise the dead, restore legs, arms, eyes, etc. No, miracles are not being performed today. They were at one time, to confirm the word and to convince the people that they were of God. But now since we have the confirmed word, miracles are no longer necessary. If one won't believe the scriptures then he wouldn't believe a miracle if he saw one (John 20:30-31).
7. A false doctrine is that sprinkling and pouring are baptism. This is false because sprinkling and pouring could not be baptism since baptism

means a burial, immersion, etc. (Romans 6:3-4; Colossians 2:12). If you have never been immersed in water you have never been baptized, and there is just one baptism (Ephesians 4:5).

Of course, there are many other false doctrines. They are false because the Bible does not teach them. They may be preached continuously and thousands may accept them but that does not make them right. Do not accept a doctrine just because someone says it is right, but accept a thing only because the Bible teaches it. Otherwise you'll be deceived and lost.



YOUR EXAMINATION

1. Is everything taught in the name of religion true? _____
2. How may we know if a doctrine is true? _____

3. What does John admonish us to do? _____

4. Why are some doctrines false? _____

5. God has predestined that the _____ group be saved, and the _____ group of people be lost.
6. Who must decide which group each one will be in? _____
7. If we could not choose to do good or to do evil, all the exhortations and writings and commands would be in _____
8. Are babies born with sin? _____
9. Did David say that he was born with sin? _____
10. Christ told his followers that they must become

as _____

11. When does one become sinful? _____

12. Are there many churches according to the Bible?

13. Is one denomination as good as another? _____
14. Does faith only save? _____
15. Faith serves as what? _____
16. A person must be _____ unto _____
to be saved.
17. Can anyone raise the dead today? _____
18. What was the purpose of miracles during the
first century A. D.? _____
19. Why are they not needed today? _____

20. What is baptism? _____

21. If we believe a false doctrine what will become
of us? _____

KEY 30

BASIC BIBLE TEACHINGS

In this our last lesson of the series we want to point out a number of fundamental Bible teachings to which we did not have time to give attention before now. This will be only a brief study of them but you may study further on your own. Remember, too, that just because they are being briefly mentioned that does not mean that they are of less importance than some other Bible subjects. So please note:

1. The Bible teaches unity. Christ prayed that we might all be one (John 17). He has but one church, one name, one worship, one plan of salvation, etc. There is one Lord, one faith, one baptism, one way to live, and one way to heaven. If all would follow the Bible there would be only one of all of these things.
2. The purpose of becoming a Christian should not be to get a job, to increase one's business influence, etc., but to be saved, to do God's will, and to help others.
3. One should sit down and count the cost before he becomes a Christian. If he decides that he is ready to accept whatever comes regardless of

the persecution that he may receive or his economic situation, or any other hardships he might face, then he is ready to follow the Lord. If he is not willing to pay the price he should not become a Christian.

4. There is just one way to get into Christ and that is through obeying the gospel, and the last act of obeying the gospel is baptism. The Bible teaches that one is baptized into Christ (Romans 6:3, 4). If one is therefore a Christian, he is in Christ, having been baptized into him. If he has never been immersed in water, he is not in Christ, and therefore he is not a Christian. And it is only in Christ that one can receive the spiritual blessings of God (Ephesians 1:3).

5. According to the New Testament all animal meats are clean and may be eaten. This lesson was taught to Peter in Acts 10 and 11. Paul said that the day would come in which there would be those who would forbid to marry and command to abstain from the eating of meats and he continues by saying, "... which God hath created to be received with thanksgiving of them which believe and know the truth. For every creature of God is good, and nothing to be refused, if it be received with thanksgiving: for it is sanctified by the word of God and prayer" (I Timothy 4:1-5). It is true that under the Law of Moses, God forbade his people to eat

certain meats, but under the New Testament he teaches that all animal meats are clean to be partaken of. Do you know what an individual does when he refuses to eat certain meat on the grounds that it is unclean? He is only showing his ignorance of the scriptures. Of course, if an individual doesn't like a certain meat or doesn't want to eat a particular meat then it is all right for him not to eat it. But he shouldn't tell others that it is a sin for them to partake of it. That would be making a law where God has not made one and therefore it would be wrong.

6. The Bible condemns man when he bows before idols. However, these do not have to be material or physical statues. Anything to which man gives most of his time or attention becomes his idol. It could be his job, his money, his family, or some other thing. Our Lord desires us to worship and serve him, ever putting him and his kingdom first (Matthew 6:33).
7. One is not born into this world as a Christian but he becomes a Christian only when he reaches the age of accountability and obeys the gospel of Christ. Many think that because they call themselves Christians, or because their parents were supposed to be Christians, that makes them Christians, but it does not.
8. All who obey the gospel receive the gift of the

Holy Spirit (Acts 2:38). However, this does not give one the power to perform miracles, etc. Miracles were performed until the word of God was given in its written form but then they ceased because there was no longer a need for them. The Holy Spirit, in a non-miraculous way, dwelling in one, helps him to walk close to God and to be faithful.

9. The Bible teaches that all will die (Hebrews 9:27). It also teaches that all will stand before the judgment one day to be judged according to the deeds done in the body whether they be good or bad (II Corinthians 5:10). In connection with this the Bible teaches that all will be resurrected and the righteous will go to heaven but the evil will go to hell and both heaven and hell will be for all eternity (John 5:28, 29; Matthew 25).

10. The Lord will come back some day. We don't know when that will be for only God knows (Matthew 24:36). When he comes he will destroy the world with fire.

And so the Bible teaches. We could go on and on uncovering other precious truths, but perhaps enough has been touched upon to cause you to want to make a more thorough study of these things as well as the many other truths of the Bible. May God bless you to this end.

YOUR EXAMINATION

1. For what did Christ pray? _____
2. List some things of which there is only one in God's plan _____

3. Why should one become a Christian? _____

4. What should one do before becoming a Christian? _____
5. What should he be willing to endure for Christ's sake? _____
6. How can one get into Christ? _____
7. What is the final step in obeying the gospel? _____

8. In whom are all spiritual blessings? _____
9. What lesson was taught to Peter in Acts 10 and 11? _____
10. What did Paul say about the eating of meats? _____

11. To forbid the eating of certain meats is to make a _____ where God hasn't made one.
12. Man is forbidden to worship what? _____
13. Name some things that can become idols to us

14. We must always put God _____
15. All must _____ and all must stand before the

16. For how long will heaven and hell exist? _____
17. What will Christ do when he returns? _____

18. All who obey the gospel receive what? _____

19. How does the Holy Spirit help us? _____

20. How does one become a Christian? _____

21. Are you a Christian according to God's word?
